

THE
ELEMENTS
OF
COMMERCE,
POLITICS AND FINANCES,
IN
THREE TREATISES
ON THOSE
IMPORTANT SUBJECTS.

BY THOMAS MORTIMER, ESQ.

Author of a Treatise on the FUNDS, entitled,
EVERY MAN HIS OWN BROKER.

Cum celeritate temporis, utendi velocitate certandum est. *Seneca de Brev. Vitæ.*

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W. Musgrave.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE singular circumstances that have attended this work since its first publication in the year 1772, make it necessary for the author to lay a short state of facts material to his literary reputation, and to his character as a good subject and citizen, before the first generous encouragers of the undertaking, and those who may hereafter become purchasers of the work.

In the months of *January* and *February*, 1773, the editors of *THE CRITICAL REVIEW* thought the book “ of such essential consequence to those who wish to qualify “ themselves for publick affairs,” that they devoted a considerable portion of their useful publications for those months, to the discussion and recommendation of its most valuable contents. They observe, “ that the subject of political œconomy is extremely complicated, and had not been reduced to a regular system, it was therefore with pleasure they beheld political and commercial principles delineated on a “ rational and instructive plan.”

In the month of *May* 1773, the editors of *THE MONTHLY REVIEW*, after a long and candid examination of the work, in which they pointed out its blemishes, as well as its perfections, mention it, “ as an elaborate and meritorious work, the “ design of which is certainly of a very useful nature, and extensive as the subjects comprehended in it are, they are of opinion, that the ingenious author has “ not only exhibited great knowledge in his manner of treating these, but what is “ still more valuable, he shows himself to have been actuated by a warm desire to “ promote the publick good throughout.”

These characters of the performance do the author the more honour, as he is totally unknown to any of the gentlemen concerned in the Reviews, and from his long residence abroad has never had an opportunity of associating with those clubs of eminent men of *GENIUS*, whose plan is, reciprocally to recommend each others productions to the publick, by letters through the channel of newspapers, and other periodical productions. The nationality of the North Britons is a commendable virtue, which they have exercised with great success in this manner, to support the literary success of their ingenious countrymen.

In the summer of 1773, the Laudable Society for the Relief of Persons confined in Prison for small Debts was instituted, he presumes to believe, on the hints thrown out in his lectures, to crowded audiences of nobility and merchants at the London Coffee-house in the winter of 1771; and on that part of his work, which treats of the administration of commercial affairs, page 197.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the course of reading those lectures, which contained the outlines of the printed work; several respectable merchants were particularly struck with the observations on the inhumanity of *fictitious insurances* on the lives of sick persons, state prisoners, and others in the like unhappy circumstances. See the chapter on Insurance, page 175. And soon after, a board was put up at Lloyd's, with a declaration on the part of the principal merchants and underwriters, that they would have no *connexions* whatever, with any persons who countenanced or were concerned in those insurances.

It is very true, that the author values himself chiefly on a warm desire to promote the publick good. In this view, he makes it a point to serve his country to the best of his abilities, let who will be its ministers. He has not the honour to be known to Lord North, but he has had the happiness to see him adopt in the administration of the finances, some of his proposed taxes on articles of luxury. See *ELEMENTS OF FINANCES*, p. 459 and 460. Others are recommended, page 461; and all are calculated to lessen the burthens on the labouring poor and manufacturers. From his lordship's well-known fortitude, integrity, and abilities, every humane and politick improvement of the publick revenue may be expected; but the circumstances of the nation are changed; this work was published in a time of profound peace.

The author takes the liberty to remind Lord Beauchamp, that the first idea of his lordship's bill, to prevent *arrests* for debts under *ten pounds*, was given in this work; and he respectfully thanks his lordship for having supported by an act of legislation, the humanity, policy, and moral rectitude of his observations on the administration of commercial affairs. With respect to the eminent writers who have trod in the same path since his publication, he is sorry to observe, that they have taken his little town by storm, and pillaged it without mercy. Mr. Eden, in his celebrated letters to the Earl of Carlisle, has done ample justice to his friend Dr. Smith; but have either of them acted the part of candid men to their unknown friend Mr. Mortimer? Let the readers of *their* works and of *his* determine.

It only remains to be mentioned, that the original publisher having retired from trade, the remaining copies of the work have been assigned to another bookseller, which necessarily occasions a re-publication with variations in the title, and furnishes an opportunity for annexing this advertisement.

INTRODUCTION.

THE present and future grandeur, fame, riches, and happiness of Great Britain, depend so entirely on the ingenuity, industry, and commercial spirit of its inhabitants, and on the wisdom of its legislature, that no study seems more important than that which tends to convey proper ideas of those most essential subjects, COMMERCE, POLITICS, and FINANCES ; especially for those, who, by their rank, fortune, or connections in life, may hereafter be called upon to direct and improve, or to patronize and reward the exertions of genius and honest labour in their fellow-citizens; either by representing them in parliament, or by taking a part in the administration of government, as ministers, or magistrates. But so many qualifications are requisite to form the character of a complete British member of parliament, or statesman ; and the life of man is so short, that it is totally impossible to devote any very

considerable portion of time to the investigation of every art and science; or even to read, with attention, amidst a variety of other avocations, all the voluminous productions of the press on those interesting subjects, which are the objects of this work.

A NECESSITY therefore arises of reducing those arts and sciences, the knowledge of which are likely to be most intimately connected with our stations in life, to certain concise elementary principles. This has been recommended by the ablest writers, and it has been effected with success in theology, history, law, physic, philosophy, and the mathematics, proving of singular utility to the students in each profession.

ON this foundation, and animated by this encouragement, the Editor of THE ELEMENTS OF COMMERCE, POLITICS, AND FINANCES, ventured to pursue the same plan; and having diligently collated, and accurately selected, from the best writers of every nation, the fundamental principles of the three subjects just recited, he had the honour to attend several of the young nobility and gentry of this kingdom, in the capacity of private tutor; inculcating, in the form of private lectures, a theoretical and practical knowledge of commerce, politics, and finances. A few years attention to this pleasing task naturally brought with

it new improvements, drawn from observations on the practicable part of commerce; on the political state of Europe in general; and on the extension of public credit, and of the funded system in England and France during the late war; at the close of which, the Editor being appointed to an honourable station abroad*, had a favourable opportunity, in the course of five years residence, to collect and add to his plan, some modern improvements in the commercial and political departments, and also respecting the administration of the public revenues of different states on the continent.

On his return to England he again resumed the office of private preceptor on the same subjects, which profession he still continues; but observing, that the interesting state of public affairs, and the multitude of fashionable amusements, engrossed so much time in the polite world, that the requisite hours could very rarely be allotted for a regular course of study, he determined to revise and correct his manuscript, and to throw it into such a form, that from the press, it might find its way to the library, and prove an useful guide, to be consulted at leisure, by all those persons, who are, or may be hereafter, directly or indirectly, concerned in commercial, political, or revenue

* British Vice-consul for the Austrian Netherlands.

affairs. But the execution of this design was retarded for some time, owing to the persuasions of a great number of the Editor's friends, who wished to have a summary of a work, which they thought generally useful, delivered in public lectures. In compliance with their better judgment, abstracts from the three treatises were accordingly read in different parts of London and Westminster, to very polite and crowded audiences, by whom they were received with tokens of entire approbation.

IN support of the utility of the design, it may not be improper to point out the want of a work of this kind, from the complaints that have been long since made in print, of the very limited, inadequate ideas of each subject, discernable in those whose high stations in society require the most perfect knowledge of them all. And, first, with respect to commerce.

THE best writers on the maritime power and commerce of this country, concur with me in maintaining, that there is a manifest defect in the education of British youth of high rank and fortune, and of the sons of our opulent citizens, by neglecting to instruct them in this very important branch of knowledge, the commercial art. One, in particular, of great repute*, has gone so far as to

* Vid. Preface to Gee on Trade and Navigation, p. 13.

INTRODUCTION. v

assert, " That though we are very happy in the constitution of our legislature, yet it is to be feared our parliaments have sometimes been misled, when matters relative to trade have been brought under their consideration." He might have added, grossly imposed on by interested merchants and traders; which has been the occasion of such frequent amendments and repeals of acts of parliament respecting commerce.

NOR is this to be wondered at, when we consider the number of nobles, gentlemen, officers of the army and navy, lawyers, and spiritual lords, in parliament, whose education has been totally foreign from all enquiry into the means of improving arts, manufactures, and commerce; yet the education of a British senator ought to be so general as to include a competent knowledge of every subject that can possibly be brought into parliament. But above all, young gentlemen should not be permitted to make the tour of Europe, till they have acquired clear ideas of the first principles of COMMERCE, POLITICS, and FINANCES. Were this rule strictly followed, their observations, in the course of their travels, would prove highly beneficial to themselves and to their native country; for, instead of returning with the most ample accounts of cabinets of curiosities, of the rarities, of the dress, intrigues, and

and amusements of the different nations of Europe, they would make themselves acquainted with their commercial and political maxims; they would notice their inventions and improvements in the useful arts, and the various modes of raising, collecting, and managing their public revenues.

THE errors of parliament may be rectified by amendments, or repeals of acts detrimental to commerce; but the effect of ignorance in commercial affairs becomes more fatal, when it gets possession of the administration of government in maritime and commercial states. The history of England furnishes too many instances of the imbecility of entire administrations in this respect; the very department peculiarly charged with the inspection and care of commercial affairs, having often been filled by gentlemen, who could not lay claim to the least mercantile knowledge. When this has been the case, and that (unhappily) the superior offices of state were likewise occupied by men equally deficient in this point, foreign powers have seldom failed to avail themselves of such junctures, to seduce our artificers, artists, and manufacturers; to violate treaties of commerce, by laying heavy duties and prohibitions on our merchandize entering their respective countries, contrary to express stipulations; and, by various
other

other means, to annoy and disturb our merchants. But, when our Board of Trade and Plantations, which should be stiled *the Council of Commerce*, has been composed of men versed in the commercial art, and capable of communicating all due information to the superior officers of state, Great Britain has ever rose superior to all other maritime powers, and has extended her commerce and national credit to the remotest parts of the globe.

IN a word, so great is the advantage arising, not only to the community, but to every individual, from an early attainment of commercial knowledge, that there have been but few, if any, who were tolerably versed in it, who have not either improved their estates and fortunes, by entering into commercial connections; or raised themselves to honourable and important offices in the state. I mean this of gentlemen, whose rank, situation, and patrimony, would perhaps have entitled them to step forth into public life, even without this knowledge; but who, with this addition, have been able to command respect and veneration from their fellow-citizens, and to immortalize their fame, through the signal services they have rendered their country (in the most perilous times) by a glorious administration of the public affairs of the state.

THAT

THAT an early study of the true principles of political wisdom is essentially necessary in a country which boasts so excellent a constitution, will scarcely be denied ; nor yet, that we have been shamefully negligent on this head : indeed every man's daily observation must convince him, that the subjects of Great Britain would have been more happy, and the administration of government much easier of late years, if a false definition of politics had not so generally prevailed, which has been wholly owing to the want of instilling right ideas of this important science into the minds of youth, whereby they would be prepared to resist the bad impressions which crafty, designing men now readily make on their minds, respecting the views and conduct of the government they live under. If, from being unprincipled, we take up every vague opinion, embrace it for a time, and then exchange it as readily, when interest or ambition suggests a convenient variation, it cannot be wondered at, for no care has been taken to inculcate that veneration for the first principles of civil society, which would animate us to a love of our country, and fire us with emulation, in the cause of civil and religious liberty, and in the support of the dignity and authority of an upright government founded on these principles.

THE

THE picture of the present times is exhibited in a most masterly manner, by the late celebrated Bishop of Cloyne, on the strength of whose authority, the Editor thinks the utility of this part of his plan fully established. “ The
“ pretensions and discourses of men, throughout these
“ kingdoms, would, at first view, lead one to think that
“ the inhabitants were all politicians ; and yet, perhaps,
“ political wisdom hath, in no age or country, been
“ more talked of, or less understood. Licence is taken
“ for the end of government, and popular humour for its
“ origin. No reverence for the laws, no attachment to
“ the constitution, little attention to matters of consequence, and great altercations about trifles.” The sure method of remedying these grievances is, to make the science of politics a branch of British education, as youth advance to years of maturity. But as we have no public schools for this valuable purpose, the Editor flatters himself that his Elements of Politics, and his private instructions to his Pupils, may supply the want of them; at least till the state shall think proper to make the care of the education of those, who are likely to become its legislators and governors, a matter of public concern.

THE great increase and extent of the commercial connections of Great Britain, arising from the augmentation

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of

* I N T R O D U C T I O N.

of her maritime power, from new territorial acquisitions, and from the flourishing state of her colonies, having totally changed the face of affairs in this kingdom, in the course of the present century, and evidently given to the monied interest, great weight and influence in the state; the study of every branch of the public revenues, and of the public funds, which are the grand bulwark of the power and influence of the monied men, becomes a necessary part of education, and should have had its rise with the origin of these funds; but though they have annually increased, with astonishing rapidity, from the Revolution to the present time, yet the generality of those, whose situation in life may afford them reasonable expectations of being chosen directors of those funds, representatives of the people in parliament, or servants of the crown in the revenue department, are often quite uninformed, and unskilled in matters of this nature; and it is maintained by some writers of great eminence, "that successive parliaments have been held since that memorable æra, in which very few of the members have had any tolerable idea of public credit, as it stands supported, or becomes endangered by the increase of the national debt."

THE same method is pursued with respect to this subject as the two former: the origin of the public revenues of
nations

nations is traced ; the various resources of the most ancient empires are pointed out ; their methods of amassing treasures, or of raising money as a provision for war, and other extraordinary demands on the state, are made known ; and the principles on which all their revenue transactions were founded, are carefully preserved. The records of modern times furnishing new elements of finance principles, these are deduced from the history of the revenues of the maritime states of Europe ; and every source of revenue, which has been found practicable and productive, is laid open. Lastly, the whole fabric of public credit, on which the national debt of this kingdom is founded, is critically examined, and traced to its origin ; and the principles on which it now flourishes, (to the equal astonishment and admiration of the whole world,) with the means of preventing its decline, are clearly stated ; so that the Student may be enabled to decide with precision, on every plan that shall be proposed for improving the public revenues, or for diminishing or augmenting the national debt, as the exigencies of state may require.

HAVING thus given the outlines of his plan, and pointed out the necessity, utility, and advantages of acquiring a competent knowledge of commerce, politics, and finances, the Editor has only to add, that he hopes the execution
will

will be found equal to the design; and that he may be permitted (being a candidate for general approbation) to plead the merit of having fixed the attention of his countrymen to studies of the utmost consequence to the welfare of Great Britain, and facilitated the means of pursuing them, by a diligent, faithful extraction of the ESSENCE of every work of reputation that could afford him the least assistance in completing his own; which, he flatters himself, may be substituted in the place of most of them, and be considered as a compendium of desirable knowledge and profitable instruction.

C O N T E N T S.

E L E M E N T S O F C O M M E R C E.

	Page		Page
T HE origin of commercial ideas —	2	Just encomium on the first settlers of our	
Concise history of the commerce of the		North American colonies —	153
ancients, with a regular deduction of		Importance of our colonies considered —	157
their commercial principles —	4	Objections to colonization refuted —	158
Anecdotes of the commerce of the Low		Difference between colonies and factories	
Countries —	12	stated —	161
P A R T II.		An author refuted, who asserts, that the	
Historical account of the rapid progress of		advantages we derive from our dominion	
inland trade and universal commerce in		in Bengal, is preferable to those arising	
England, in the reign of queen Elizabeth	16	from our North American colonies —	162
P A R T III.		Historical account of the exploits of Lord	
Introduction to the general principles on		Clive, and of the revolutions in our	
which the prosperity of inland trade, the		India Company's affairs at Bengal, from	
basis of universal commerce, depends	27	1751 to 1761 —	168
On agriculture —	29	Conclusion in favour of our colonies —	170
On population —	40	On assurance or insurance —	171
On manufactures —	54	The inhuman practice of fictitious insu-	
P A R T IV.		rances in the alley censured —	175
The principles of universal commerce —	107	On the ballance of commerce —	180
Of exportation —	110	New hypothesis started on this subject --	182
Of importation —	113	The amount of the exports and imports of	
Of the principles which ought to regulate		Great Britain, to and from all quarters	
both —	114	of the globe; and of the reputed—viz.	
On public commercial companies, and the		the pecuniary—ballances —	184
question, whether they are beneficial or		On the administration of commercial	
pernicious to commerce, discussed —	127	affairs —	189
On colonies —	148	CONCLUSION. Sketch of the education,	
		accomplishments and character of a	
		British merchant —	208

E L E M E N T S O F P O L I T I C S.

	Page		Page
I N T R O D U C T I O N	219	Aristocracy	252
The early study of political wisdom essentially necessary for all persons, who have the most distant prospect of possessing any office of confidential trust and importance in the state	220	Democracy	253
Definition of the science of politics, and of its peculiar terms	222	Analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy	255
Politics the first philosophy, a note from Lord Bolingbroke	223	Origin of the British constitution	263
The principles of the law of nature	224	On the peculiar advantages of the British constitution	269
Rules and obligations arising out of these principles	227	On the prerogatives and obligations of a king of Great Britain	279
On the law of nations	229	On the rights and privileges of British subjects, and the duties they owe their sovereigns and their country	302
On the origin of governments	242	Abstract from the History of England; tracing the rise, progress, and complete establishment of the right of free representation in parliament	304
P A R T II.		C O N C L U S I O N. Sketch of the accomplishments requisite to form a complete member of the British parliament	324
On the different forms of government which have generally prevailed in the world	248		
Monarchy explained	249		

E L E M E N T S O F F I N A N C E S.

P A R T I.

	Page
I N T R O D U C T I O N	337
Historical account of the ancient methods of acquiring public revenues, and of supporting the expences of government	340
Origin of taxes	343
Of those subsisting in the Athenian, Lacedæmonian and Roman commonwealths	344
Military aids, personal services, and contributions in kind, introduced into Europe, after the dissolution of the Roman empire	349
Subsidies in money required	350
Invention of bills of exchange by Jews	ibid.
Origin of paper-credit	351

P A R T II.

	Page
On the nature, solidity, present extent, and national advantages of the PUBLIC CREDIT and FUNDING SYSTEM of Great Britain	359
Origin and improvement of BANKS	360
Of the Bank of Amsterdam	361
Of the Bank of England	362
Origin of the funding system	363
Defence of this system, and of public credit	364
Objections to both stated and answered	367
On stock-jobbing, considered as a consequence of public credit, and the funding system	392

C O N T E N T S.

v

	Page
The artificial fluctuations in the price of the funds accounted for	402
Rules to judge of the rise and fall of the stocks, from real causes	406
On the inexpediency and inefficacy of all projects for paying off the reputed NATIONAL DEBT	412
New hypothesis respecting this debt	414
The yearly rents or annuities due to the public creditors, the real and sole national debt	417
Account of the first scheme for paying off the national debt, by the establishment of the sinking fund	418
— of the failure of this scheme	421
— of Mr. Andrew Hooke's project	423
Material objection to it	425
Stephen Barbier's proposal	— <i>ibid.</i>
Mr. Pinto's scheme	428
Objections to it	430
Dr. Price's	431
Objections to it	434
New application of the sinking fund recommended	437

P A R T III.

	Page
On taxation, and the best means of improving the public revenues	440
Enquiry why taxes are not paid with a good grace	441
Defects pointed out in the mode of levying our taxes	443
On customs	446
Frauds in the administration of them	447
On excises	450
Objections to them stated and discussed	451
Summary of proceedings against public defaulters in the administration of the public revenues	456
Obligations on the part of the people to pay the taxes cheerfully and without fraud, when levied on equitable principles, and faithfully administered	458
Hints for abolishing the taxes on the necessities of life; and for substituting others, to supply the deficiencies	459

A U T H O R S
CONSULTED IN COMPOSING THE
F O L L O W I N G S H E E T S.

ADDISON

Anderfon
Aristotle
Bacon
Barbeyrac
Barnard
Beauwes
Beccari
Berkeley
Bielfield
Blackstone
Bodinus
Bolingbroke
Burlamaqui
Cary
Child
Cicero
D'Alembert
D'Avenant
D'Eon
De Foe
De Wit
Ellis
Evelyn

Filmer
Fletcher
Gee
Gordon
Grotius
Harrington
Harris
Hoadly
Hobbes
Houghton
Huet
Hume
Hutchinson
Jennings
King
Law
L'Estrange
Locke
Mably
Machiavel
Magens
Malynes
Mirabeau
Montague

Montesquieu
Mun
Neville
Petty
Pinto
Plato
Postlethwayt
Price
Puffendorff
Raleigh
Rousseau
Sidney
Somers
Steele
Stevens
Squire
Sully
Swift
Temple
Trenchard
Turner
Vatel
Voltaire
Wiquefort, and Wolfe.

THE
ELEMENTS
OF
COMMERCE.

PART I.

COMMERCE, in the general sense of the word, means no more than a reciprocal communication, intercourse, or correspondence, between man and man; but, as a term of art, it constantly includes the idea of exchange, and, in its ordinary acceptation, it serves to distinguish the mercantile negotiations, carried on by the inhabitants of different nations with each other, from the operations of inland TRAFFIC, commonly known under the denomination of TRADE, and limited to a particular place or country.

THE vulgar acceptation being most generally understood, and free from that ambiguity in which we are too often involved by scholastic definitions, we shall adhere to it strictly in this treatise on the Elements of Commerce.

OUR first enquiry will naturally be directed to the origin of internal traffic between man and man; which, as it gave birth to the very idea of it, may properly be styled the *Parent of foreign Commerce*.

CIVIL LIBERTY and TRAFFIC, being both of them derived from human necessities, are therefore reputed to have had one and the same origin, and to have grown up together: for no sooner did men find the necessity of associating, and of forming some sort of civil government, for their safety and protection, against the violence of uncurbed passions, and the vicious dispositions of individuals of their own species (while in the state of nature) than they began to traffic, or trade with each other.

FROM the earliest accounts we have of mankind, a distinction of characters has been as evidently traced as the difference in the frame and bodily constitution of the human race. As some of these were ever found more robust and active than others, so were some minds found disposed to ingenuity and industry, while others discovered a propensity to indolence and idleness, the parents of mischief. Hence arose the necessity of associating, and of framing and submitting to the laws of civil society, under some mode of government, for the protection of life and liberty, and for the limiting and ascertaining of property.

TILL this was done, as there could not be any fixed property, so neither was there any traffic; for, whatever the robust and active, the ingenious and industrious, had procured (over and above what was necessary for the demands of nature) the weak and imbecile, the indolent, the inactive, and the vicious, seized by violence, extorted by fraud and deceit, or obtained through pity and compassion.

BUT no sooner was property limited and protected, and personal liberty secured from savage violence, by civil institutions, than the ingenious and industrious began a reciprocal traffic. The husbandman, who employed himself in cultivating land, had neither time nor capacity to invent or improve the instruments necessary for his use; nor had the artist, who furnished them to him, either skill or leisure to sow the seed, or plant the vegetable, that must produce food for his subsistence. A traffic between these, therefore, naturally arose; the plough-share was exchanged for corn; one art was improved by another, as one artist was assisted by the other. Their mutual necessities brought them together, produced a traffic between them, and (without
entering

entering into farther details) from hence we derive the origin of **BARTER** or **EXCHANGE**, which furnished the first idea of universal commerce, and which, to this hour, continues to be its first and chief elementary principle *.

IN process of time, one society of men, finding that the spot of earth they occupied produced, through their labour and industry, a superfluity of the necessaries of life; and perceiving, that there were many things wanting, not merely for the continuance of their being or existence, but for the establishment of their well-being, they resolved on endeavouring to procure these, by exchanging their superfluous commodities for those which they either wanted, or imagined they wanted, and either conceived or knew to be the produce of other countries, or the fruit of the industry and ingenuity of other societies of men. These ideas and perceptions gave birth to the art of **NAVIGATION**, whereby the enquiry was set on foot, what was the produce of different countries, and what the reciprocal wants of each society; and, as people encreased, so did commerce, which caused many to go off from husbandry to manufactures, and other ways of living; for convenience whereof they began communities. This was the origin of all towns; which being found necessary for trade, their inhabitants increased by expectation of profit. This introduced foreign trade, or traffic with neighbouring nations; and this, a desire rather to settle on some navigable rivers, than in remote inland places, whereby they might be more easily supplied from the country with commodities fit to export, and to disperse thither those they had imported from abroad.

HAVING thus marked the origin of commercial ideas, let us, for a moment, suspend our enquiries, to make one important, awful remark, which seems to break in upon the mind like a ray of celestial intelligence, and thus inform it: Here, O man! without poring over volumes of

* “ The first original of trade, both domestic and foreign, was barter; when one private person, having an overplus of such things as his neighbour wanted, furnished him therewith, for their value in such whereof the other had plenty, but he stood in need of the same.”

theology, thou hast an evident demonstration of the existence of a first intelligent cause, the supreme Creator and Disposer of all things, the one, only universal DEITY; for what intelligence but the Supreme, who but the Deity, could inspire the idea to the first society of men who entertained it, that there were other spots of earth to explore, from which they were separated by an abyss of waters? or, even admitting their first intercourse to have been with other societies of men on the same continent, or tract of land, who but the Deity could bring them together, or inspire them with different degrees of knowledge, skill, and industry, so that some should cultivate the vine, and others grain; that some should seek to defend their bodies from the inclemencies of the weather, by the skins of animals; that others should fabricate their woolly fleeces, and a third the fibres of trees and plants for the same purpose? In a word, where the intercourse between the inhabitants of a continent was not sufficient to consume the products of nature and industry, but there still remained a surplus of various articles, what but the supreme Intelligence could convey the notion of rendering arts, manufactures, and barter or exchange, universal throughout the habitable globe, by means of navigation?

WE have found that BARTER is the first principle of Commerce, NAVIGATION the second; let us now examine who are the first people on the records of time that rendered themselves famous, and their society flourishing, by reducing these two principles to practice.

HISTORY informs us*, that we owe the origin and first rudiments of navigation to the Egyptians and Phœnicians; all beyond this is involved in fable and obscurity; nor is it necessary for us to trace the origin of commerce farther than to the first acknowledged commercial nation; let us note the measures they took to improve and extend navigation and commerce, which were born twins, if I may be allowed the expression, and remain inseparable to this hour.

THE EGYPTIANS were a warlike people, and governed by KINGS, who were all of them either heroes or legislators, whose ambition was to raise their monarchy to the highest degree of perfection; and to attain

* Strabo, lib. 6.

this end, they encouraged navigation, established a maritime power, and extended their commerce, of which they had found the benefits, by conquests. They attentively examined such things as were necessary to be established; but, when they had once established and judged them useful, they never changed them through caprice or inconstancy. They also loved to indulge themselves in their pleasures, and were extremely fond of a variety of foreign novelties; but, in the gratification of their luxurious inclinations, they ever had an eye to their national interests, and made their very passions subservient to their commercial transactions.

THUS, while ambition prompted them to subdue kingdoms, the chief use they made of their conquests was to make slaves of the inhabitants, whom they employed in all laborious works, while their own people indulged themselves in a state of luxury; the means for which commerce had supplied. This is the account their own and other historians give of this people*.

HERE, by the way, let us observe, that we have the origin of the SLAVE TRADE; an article of modern, as it was of ancient commerce, and is equally justifiable now as it was in the time of the Egyptians (if commerce itself be legal) which will hardly be denied.

THE principal commerce of the Egyptians was that of the East, by way of the Red Sea; and, it is to be remembered that this commerce was free and open to every inhabitant of Egypt. As Egypt was

* The ancient mythologists have made the Egyptian God Thoyth, who is the Grecian Mercury, to be the author of navigation and merchandise. They tell us that Osiris, who is their Bacchus, attempted the conquest of India, as we learn since from history that Sesostris had done; because that the Egyptians, about that time, drove a considerable trade with the Indians, and even brought them under their government. It was the same Bacchus, according to these writers, who first taught the art of buying and selling to mankind; that is, the art of trade. They give us, likewise, to understand what was the trade between the Egyptians and Greeks, by the voyage which Danaus made to Greece, believing him to be the first who made use of a galley, and that before his time they had no better invention than floats, which they pretend were used first in the Red Sea. But, be this as it will, these fables give us light enough to attribute to the Egyptians the invention of commerce and navigation. *History of the Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients, by Huet, bishop of Avranches.*

intersected by an infinite number of canals, the communication between their great cities was rendered short and easy; and they derived one great advantage from the situation of their cities, all of them standing nearly on a level; by which, the transit of merchandise to the ports for exportation, and of foreign commodities from the ports to the inland provinces, was greatly facilitated; and rendered, on the whole, more secure and reasonable than if they had been obliged to make use of land carriage; which (besides) was, in those days, attended with so much delay, that great losses were sustained on perishable commodities, in long journies from sea-ports to inland towns.

IN short, there never was any nation who knew so well as the Egyptians how to make use of all the advantages and all the conveniencies that are to be derived from a great river. They cut canals in all parts; which, at the time of the inundation of the Nile, were sufficiently supplied with water from that general source; and even thereby rendered useful for the transportation of merchandise and the necessaries of life. In those countries which want this convenience, all the articles of home consumption are excessively dear; and of this, France furnishes a standing proof; the plenty which that fertile country produces being rendered, in a great measure, abortive, owing to the badness of the roads and the delay and expence of land carriage. For instance, though their coasts furnish a variety and great abundance of fish, yet, before it arrives at the capitals of the inland Provinces, one half is spoiled, the remainder loses its intrinsic value, being stale and unwholesome, and the price after all is exorbitant.

THAT we may not have occasion to enlarge on the same causes producing the same effects in modern times, and in countries with which we are familiarly acquainted, let it be remembered that the Chinese, and, nearer home, the Dutch and the Flemings, derive the same advantages from their navigable canals and level situation; and at present, in many parts of England, navigable canals have been cut; several patriotic noblemen and gentlemen having given great encouragement to these useful communications between cities, manufacturing towns, and sea-ports; but the face of the country must ever prevent a
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a general introduction of navigable canals, from a want of that universal level which prevails in the Austrian Netherlands and the United Provinces.

THE monuments of the grandeur, riches, and luxury of Egypt, arising from their commerce and navigation, are so easily to be traced in the works of historians and travellers, that I need only recommend a perusal of them for further satisfaction on that subject. But the commercial knowledge we derive from the Egyptians must be ranked among our elements of commerce. It consists of two objects.

1. THE employment of slaves procured from other countries, by conquest or purchase, as necessary implements of commerce.

2. THE making navigable canals in countries where it is practicable, for the facility of transporting merchandise to and from sea-ports, and for rendering the communication of inland counties easy, for the benefit of the inland trade, or home consumption.

“ If the Chinese are really descended from the Egyptians, as many learned men of the greatest repute have maintained, it must be owned they are so far from falling short of their ancestors, that they greatly surpass them. In effect, they have rendered their whole country navigable and easy of access, by canals of communication from one river to another, and contriving these canals with such industry, that there is scarce a town, or even a village, which has not the conveniency of water-carriage. We see, likewise, upon these rivers, a prodigious number of people, active, frugal, taken up entirely with the study of commerce, and who very rarely go on shore; and, as all these people have nothing but boats of different figures for their estates, it frequently happens that these boats unite, and form a kind of hamlets; which the Chinese range with such symmetry that they call them, with great propriety, water towns.”

THE rapid progress of the Phœnicians, who formed a considerable maritime power, and undertook very long and dangerous voyages to improve their commerce, is still more remarkable than that of the Egyptians; for they possessed only a narrow slip of the coast of Asia, a situation highly disadvantageous, in which they were blocked up in a great

great measure by powerful neighbours on every side. Their first attention, under these circumstances, was to make as many fortified ports, harbours, and creeks, as possible on their coast. This accomplished, they applied themselves so indefatigably to every study bearing the least relation to maritime or commercial affairs, that they acquired the reputation of being the inventors of arithmetic and astronomy, and of being the first people who reduced the commercial art into a fixed, regular, judicious system.

THIS people merit also further commendation, for having undertaken long and dangerous voyages, without receiving assistance from the lights of others, or being encouraged by any examples: they even went as far as our coasts of Cornwall to fetch tin. We can scarce conceive how great a regard the ancients had for such bold and curious persons as, by making frequent and distant voyages, and by their travels both by sea and land, introduced the knowledge of a thousand rare and useful inventions, by which they discovered, as it were, a new world.

FROM the Phœnicians (without entering deeper into their history) we derive two elementary principles of commerce, which we will set down in this place, because we purpose noting every general principle, as it arises, and shall hereafter range them in their proper order, when we come to apply them to the present state of commerce, as it is carried on by GREAT BRITAIN and her COLONIES.

1. COMMERCE must be supported by maritime power, or naval strength.

2. IT will always thrive better in free governments, either limited monarchies or republics, than in despotic absolute monarchies: therefore the Phœnicians made a more rapid progress in the arts and sciences, and carried their commerce to a much greater height than the Egyptians; for the government of the Phœnicians was republican, and their cities and ports were free and open; by which means Tyre and Sidon, and several other of their free cities, rose to a state of unrivaled opulence.

THE Ethiopians, Persians, and Arabs, at this period, were likewise concerned in commerce; but this need only be mentioned as matter of record,

record, their small consequence not requiring further notice; but if curiosity should prompt the industrious student to further researches on their account, he will find ample satisfaction in Huet's History of the Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients, chap. xi. xii. xiii. and xiv.

AFTER the destruction of Tyre by Alexander the Great, CARTHAGE became the chief seat of commerce; and the Carthaginians formed such a strong maritime force, that towards the end of the second Punic war, Carthage reckoned within her walls no less than seven hundred thousand inhabitants. No less than three hundred cities of Africa were dependant on this republic; and they had planted considerable colonies in Spain, Sicily, and Sardinia; her navies, every where formidable, daily made new conquests; in short, nothing could be more swift, or indeed more wonderful, than the rise, progress, and perfection of her maritime strength, nor of its usual consequences, luxury and indolence. Some assert, that they penetrated as far as America; but, leaving this to the decision of the speculative antiquarian, let us only remark, that here arises another principle of commerce.

THE establishment of COLONIES, for the improvement and extension of trade.

THE utility of navigation was too palpable and too striking, in respect to people of any attention, long to escape the Greeks: a nation so industrious, and who knew so well how to appropriate to themselves the inventions of others, could not fail of aiming at the dominion of the sea. We know what a vast number of vessels Greece, united and animated by her common desire of vengeance, employed in the Trojan war; how powerful they then were by sea and land; how jealous of their rights, and how unable to bear even the slightest injuries.

ONE may easily judge, so quick and enterprising as they were, they omitted nothing to preserve a just superiority on the sea, a superiority which so infinitely concerned them.

IN the age preceding the birth of ALEXANDER THE GREAT, Athens and Sparta were engaged in disputing with each other the empire of the Egean and Ionian seas. These two rivals, so different in

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their manners and customs (the one remarkable for politeness and luxury, the other distinguished by the severity of her discipline; the former more capable of inspiring love, but the latter able to force admiration) at every turn had recourse to arms. After reciprocal losses and advantages, Sparta took one hundred and fourscore ships from her enemy, besieged her in form, and forced her to surrender at discretion. Athens was humbled by this, but not absolutely destroyed; she, in her turn, repaid Sparta the same hard measure she had received.

PHILIP, king of Macedon, distinguishing clearly all the views and all the projects of the Greeks, from the very beginning of his reign, made the utmost efforts to establish a maritime force. The first pretence of which he availed himself for displaying a naval force, was, the suppression of pirates, who were grown insolent, through a long series of successful villanies, and of these he undertook to cleanse the Egean and Ionian seas. But in a short time he began to exercise himself that trade, as shameful as lucrative, as unworthy of a great prince as it was proper to fill his coffers; yet the flatterers, who followed his court, and studied his motions, invented a thousand reasons to prove it for his honour.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT, his successor, to rival CARTHAGE, built the famous city of ALEXANDRIA in EGYPT, and opened the trade between the Indian and Mediterranean seas.

THE commerce of the East, or of the East Indies, appears to have been the chief object of all the voyages undertaken by the ancients. Arrian's Periplus of the Red Sea, and the remarks of Pliny, Solinus, and Philostratus, plainly prove, that these countries were well known and frequented; but the communication between them and Europe was not accomplished till the time of Alexander.

AFTER the demolition of Carthage, and the ruin of all Greece by the Romans, they became masters of all Africa, and the greatest part of Asia; so that every thing gave way to the Roman power, and the city of Rome became the sole mistress of the profitable commerce to the East Indies; which proved the source of immense riches, and introduced into all the principal cities of Italy that refined luxury and original elegance,

ELEMENTS OF COMMERCE. II

elegance, which rendered the Roman republic the standard of taste, and enabled her to carry her improvements to such a degree of perfection, that all the productions of the polite and liberal arts (at this period of their flourishing state) have been handed down, even to the present age, as master-pieces in their several kinds; and the precious remains of these antiquities are beheld with admiration by some, with a degree of enthusiastic veneration by others, and are generally purchased and preserved at an enormous expence.

WE have only one melancholy remark to make on the well-known history of the power, wealth, and elegance of ancient Rome.

“ THAT luxury, when it is carried to such a pitch, as to introduce
“ effeminacy of manners, indolence, inactivity, and licentiousness,
“ becomes the bane of commerce, and must (sooner or later) prove
“ the destruction of any country whose welfare depends on trade and
“ navigation.”

VALERIUS PATERCULUS and TACITUS, are authors proper to be consulted for a more ample account of the effeminacy and depravity of manners which prevailed at Rome, after the demolition of Carthage, and of its effects on the commercial interests of that renowned state.

WE derive but one principle of commerce from the ancient Romans, which modern commercial states have adopted, and carried to great perfection.

THE INSURANCE OR ASSURANCE of ships and merchandise from losses at sea.

THIS is traced up to the Emperor Claudius Cæsar. The Lex Oleron (the maritime code of France) treats of it so far back as the year 1194, as being then known and practised in Europe. We shall find it established on a proper footing in England during the reign of Elizabeth.

THE Goths and Vandals compleated what effeminacy had partly accomplished, the ruin of the Roman empire; and then the commerce carried on between the Indian and Mediterranean seas was thrown into another channel; for it ceased through the Red Sea, by way of Alexandria, and was now conducted by Trebezon, Damascus, and Aleppo, which gave rise to the commerce carried on by the free states of Italy;

such as Venice, Genoa, and Pisa; and the merchandise of the East Indies was conveyed by this new channel, not only to all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, but to England, to the Netherlands, to Germany, and even to the Baltic sea.

THE situation of Bruges, in the Austrian Netherlands, rendered it at this time the emporium of all Europe. The commodities of the north, such as, corn, naval stores, &c. were brought here in the summer season, and bartered for the Asiatic commodities which arrived from the LEVANT. Thus the ships that brought corn and naval stores from the north, were freighted home with the produce of Asia, and the Levant ships returned with the supplies from the north. By this means the Hanse Towns, and all the countries of the north, partook of the delicacies of the eastern world, in return for naval stores, and such necessaries as are requisite for India voyages.

BRUGES underwent the same fate as Tyre, Carthage, and Rome, with respect to the effects of opulence and luxury. The riches they acquired made the inhabitants idle, inattentive and negligent, till at length they totally despised that very commercial art, which had been the source of their opulence. They turned gentlemen, and became candidates for titles and posts of honour under the Spanish monarchy, to which they were then subject; and this very great, and once flourishing city, is at this time half depopulated, and chiefly inhabited by a *petite noblesse* and the clergy. Some few factors still remain, who carry on an inconsiderable commerce, through the port of Ostend, with England, France, and Holland, for the consumption of Brabant and Flanders; and they likewise export some articles to Spain: but the incredible quantity of magazines or warehouses now empty, gives the curious British traveller an opportunity of seeing, very near home, a striking monument of the ruin of one of the greatest commercial cities in Europe, from causes, which will never fail to produce similar effects, in every age and country.

ANTWERP (situated also in the Austrian Netherlands) was next discovered to be as convenient as Bruges, and the inhabitants to be more industrious and attentive in the execution of all commercial transactions.

tions. To this port therefore, the commerce of Bruges was easily removed, and Antwerp, in its turn, became the most opulent city of Europe; when, by one fatal blow, all its splendor vanished almost in an instant.

WE have already remarked, that civil liberty and commerce are inseparable, and flourish together. Their connection was destroyed at Antwerp by the persecuting spirit of popery, carried to the highest degree of violence and cruelty by the Duke of Alva, the Spanish governor of the Netherlands under Philip the Second; the very monarch who made an inglorious attempt to introduce his horrid religious persecutions into England, by means of his invincible armada. The manufacturers and merchants, who were of the reformed or Protestant religion, and even several Roman Catholics, who dreaded the inquisition and its tortures (which D'Alva wanted to establish throughout the Netherlands) fled from this persecution to Amsterdam, and other cities of the United Provinces, which had just shook off the Spanish yoke. Others came over to England; and this memorable event may be said not only to have laid the foundation of the flourishing republic of Holland, but of the maritime power, extensive commerce, and opulence of England soon after this period, and of Great Britain at this hour.

EVERY favourable circumstance contributed to this happy event. Spain was governed by a persecuting bigotted tyrant, who permitted his ministers to exercise every species of rapine and violence, for the sake of the holy Roman catholic religion, and to gratify its tools of vengeance, the inquisition. Amsterdam was subjected to a republican form of government, breathing a newly imbibed spirit of liberty, and inviting all strangers to partake of this common blessing.

ENGLAND was happy in having her sceptre swayed by a princess of uncommon talents, zealous for the welfare of Europe, and a warm advocate for civil and religious liberty; and she again had the happiness of being assisted by a set of counsellors and ministers of consummate abilities, and incorruptible fidelity. No wonder then, that this was the epocha for improving and extending the commerce of England and of
Holland,

Holland, and that Amsterdam and London should rise on the ruins of Bruges and Antwerp; the former having lost itself by indolence, and the latter being depopulated by persecution.

OUR review of the origin of commerce may be closed here, with two additional principles, collected from the circumstances attending the decline and total ruin of Bruges and Antwerp.

1. INDEFATIGABLE industry and attention are requisite for carrying on inland trade and foreign commerce successfully. By indolence and neglect the inhabitants of Bruges lost both; for trade will not remain long in any place where it is received with coolness and indifference.

2. TOLERATION (in matters of religious faith) is equally necessary; for we have seen the effects of intolerance, in driving away artists, manufacturers, and merchants from Antwerp.

P A R T II.

THE chief design of tracing the origin of commerce to remotest times was, to draw from the bosom of antiquity some of the invariable principles of the commercial art, which have been preserved and adopted by the moderns, and are at this very time the basis of the extensive foreign and domestic trade carried on by the maritime and commercial powers of Europe.

AT the close of our deductions from antiquity, we left Europe in possession of the very profitable trade to the East Indies, which had been the principal object of all the expeditions, long voyages, and adventures of the ANCIENTS, and had, at different periods, enriched and aggrandized EGYPT, PHOENICIA, CARTHAGE, and ROME. We found also, that the success of the rising commerce of Europe solely depended on civil and religious liberty; in consequence of which, Venice, Amsterdam, and London, were just opening to our view a new scene of commercial enquiry; the first, as the grand mart for the produce of the eastern world; the second, as the emporium of Europe; and the last, in an infant state of commerce, politically reviewing the progress already made by the other two, adopting the maxims on which their success was founded, and adding to these a variety of other principles, peculiar to the genius and constitution of England, and which the ingenuity, industry, and natural bravery of its inhabitants combined to render practicable.

FIRE with emulation, all England engaged in the attempt to vie with the neighbouring city of Amsterdam, and to form the basis of a maritime and commercial power, that should take in every branch of the commercial art known or practised throughout the habitable globe.

IN process of time this glorious and stupendous plan (for so I may justly term it, considering the small extent of the British isles, their separation from each other, disunited interests, and various disadvantages) has been accomplished, and so compleatly accomplished, that we have seen Great Britain, notwithstanding all the opposition of rival commercial powers, who have waged with her the most expensive and bloody wars, in order to impede her progress, rise superior to every obstacle, acquire and maintain the sovereignty of the seas, and distinguish herself as the first maritime and commercial power of Europe. In a word, we see her enjoying at present a manifest superiority in that most profitable branch of ancient commerce, the EAST INDIA trade; and, whether we consider the enlargement of her territories, the strength of her maritime power, the universality of her commerce, the extent of her public credit, the opulence of her chief cities, or the flourishing state of arts and sciences, we may venture to pronounce, that she was at the summit of national glory, and of human grandeur, soon after the conclusion of the late peace.

SINCE that period, we have reason to think commerce has declined in various branches, and that these kingdoms are unhappily experiencing some of the fatal effects of that luxury, which breeds licentiousness; and of that effeminacy and dissoluteness of manners, which gradually brought on the destruction of the ancient commercial states. In this situation of affairs, the subject before us is rendered more necessary and useful; as we shall point out in the pursuit of it, the several causes of the increase and decline of commerce in general, and of that of Great Britain in particular; so that when the symptoms of a decline are discovered, gentlemen, who are, or may one day be, the guardians of the commercial interests of our country, by obtaining early a thorough knowledge of the disease, will be enabled to apply the remedy in time.

OUR enquiry into the rise and progress of the domestic trade and foreign commerce of England, and our investigation of the several leading principles, the application of which to practice has produced the highest degree of commercial perfection in these kingdoms, must commence at that glorious period of the English history, when the ever memorable Elizabeth sat upon the throne.

THE admirers of, and adepts in, the historic antiquities of England, will perhaps ask this question, Why this epoch (of all others) is pitched upon as the properest to commence our examinations into the rise of that extensive commerce Great Britain at present enjoys? The reason is obvious. Before this memorable period, England made no figure in the commercial world worthy our notice.

THE navigation and trade of England was trifling before this æra, and continued in much the same situation, with little improvement, from the time of William the Conqueror to the accession of ELIZABETH, except in one instance, which I shall not pass over in silence.

THE foreign commerce consisted only in exportations of the natural produce of the country, unmanufactured; such as tin, lead, wool, hides, iron, and fish, which were generally bartered for foreign manufactured commodities, particularly some fine woollen cloths, wrought silks, gold and silver brocades and embroideries, and cloths of gold, as they were then called. But the inland trade received a most considerable advantage as early as the reign of Edward III. which produced in process of time one of the most considerable branches of foreign commerce. Before his time the manufacturing of wool into cloths was chiefly confined to the then Spanish Netherlands, now known by the names of *Austrian*, *French*, and *Dutch* FLANDERS; and the kings of England receiving subsidies from their subjects, for the maintenance of their civil government and regal state, in wool, they were obliged to export it on their own account, and were thus necessitated to become merchants, as a means to raise and realize a revenue. On this account, they had their brokers or factors at Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, Lovain, and other cities of Flanders. The proprietors of land, and the farmers all over the kingdom, encouraging also the breeding of sheep, and the growth and management of wool, from which great profits were derived, this branch of trade became so considerable, that it is styled, by some authors, the commencement of the English commerce; nor is this to be wondered at, if it be considered that the Flemings took off their wool in prodigious quantities, and paid so high a price for it, that all people of property in England, who knew any thing of the na-

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ture of this trade and its profits, engaged in it. But in the parliament held at Westminster A. D. 1338, the exportation of wool was prohibited, a new revenue was provided for the king, and, in order to invite and encourage foreign cloth-workers, and other manufacturers of wool, to come over, and settle in England, very great privileges were granted, and pensions from the crown were allowed them, till they should be so far established as to be able to obtain a decent subsistence by their ingenuity and industry. At the same time a prohibition was laid on foreign cloths, the king's subjects being forbid to wear them; but neither this prohibition, nor yet a sumptuary law made in the 27th year of this reign, limiting and restraining the luxury of dress, particularly with respect to woollen cloths, could prevent the importation of foreign fine cloths; for, in the twenty-eighth year of this king, we find, by a record of the balance of trade, preserved in the Exchequer, the following article, "1831 pieces of fine cloths imported, at £ 6 Sterling " per piece:" so that we must conclude, that the prohibition to import or wear foreign cloths was only a simple proclamation from the king, which was not duly obeyed; the act of parliament of 1338, going no farther than to prohibit the exportation of wool, for the encouragement of the manufactures at home.

In the reign of Henry VII. the importation of wrought filks and of stuffs fabricated with silk and thread mixed, was prohibited by act of parliament.

EDWARD III. then, and Henry VII. were the only princes in whose reigns any considerable attention was given to commercial affairs, and these regulations, as yet, produced only a limited advantage, viz. the establishing of some manufacturers among us, which did not even for some time after provide a sufficiency for home consumption; nor could the very manufactures now under consideration ever have been made to answer the purposes of universal commerce, if important contingent events, such indeed as cannot possibly be included in the plans and systems of mankind, but which occasionally happen in the grand revolutions of states and empires, had not been the immediate causes of augmenting and improving, and of bringing them to perfection in England;

England; for the privileges and immunities granted by Edward III. could only serve to gain a few straglers, such as fugitives for debt, malecontents, and criminals, the outcasts of civil society, who are necessitated to transport themselves, and, generally speaking, are not either the most industrious or laborious of mankind.

ON the whole, Edward gained but a very inconsiderable number, one family of repute only being mentioned, viz. that of John Kemp, a native of Flanders, who removed into England in this reign, and was followed by about seventy different persons, not families, as some authors have asserted, from the Walloon country in the neighbourhood of MECHLIN.

BUT bodies of manufacturers, who are sober, frugal, and industrious, who are well established with their families, and who have the least spark of attachment for their native country, do not so easily leave it, and encounter all the perils of journies and voyages, upon the bare allurements of greater encouragement than they meet with at home, if they are secured there in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty; but when once their persons and properties are endangered, either by religious persecutions, by despotic tyranny, popular tumults, insurrections, civil wars, the invasions of hostile force, or the devastations of famine, a total revolution in arts, manufactures and commerce takes place; and artificers, artisans, manufacturers, and even merchants, will fly in bodies to the dominions of those princes and states who offer them the fullest enjoyment of the blessing they are in danger of losing, or of which they are actually deprived; and where, from the genius of the country, its populousness, and the extent of its commercial connections, their several arts and manufactures are most likely to be constantly wanted.

ONE of these great and singular events happened in the reign of Elizabeth.

THE Walloons, who fled from the tyranny of D'Alva into England, were most kindly received by that great queen, and they carried to perfection the woollen manufacture, which, till this event, for want of a sufficient number of skilful hands, had remained in an infant state,

making but a very slow progress, and barely supplying our markets for home consumption.

THE state of the silk manufactory in England, till a much later date, was exactly in the same situation as that of the woollen before the time of Elizabeth; for, though the prohibition on foreign wrought silks took place in the reign of Henry VII. yet so slow was the progress of the silk manufactory in England, and so trifling the improvements, that foreign silks were again imported under certain restrictions, and were worn by the opulent part of the people: nor was it till the well known impolitic revocation of the edict of Nantz, by Lewis XIV, that this manufacture was perfectly established with us, so as to prove not only a very considerable branch of domestic trade, but even of exportation.

THE Huguenots, or French protestants, being exiled from France, by this measure *, came and settled in bodies at Canterbury, and in Spital-Fields, London, where their descendants remain to this day.

VOLTAIRE, the Marquis Cæsar Beccaria Bonesaria, and some of our own most celebrated writers, particularly Anderson and De Foe, concur in opinion, that England first began to flourish as a maritime commercial state in the reign of Elizabeth.

THE manner in which Voltaire expresses himself on this occasion is so striking, that I cannot resist the temptation of reciting his own words. "From the first beginning of Elizabeth's reign," says he, "the English applied themselves to manufactures: the Flemings, " being persecuted by Philip II, removed to London, bringing with

* By the revocation of the edict of Nantz (in the year 1685) it is computed that 800,000 of her most industrious subjects were driven out of France, and that they carried along with them above five millions sterling in specie, jewels, and other effects. Philip the III^d of Spain had embraced a similar measure in that country towards the beginning of the last century. All the Moriscos, or descendants of the ancient Moors, to the number of 900,000, were banished from Spain, leaving the kingdom of Granada and the countries adjacent almost a desert, from being the best cultivated and best peopled part of his dominions. This ill-judged piece of tyranny, which his more sagacious predecessor had always rejected, had perhaps as great a share as any other cause whatever, in reducing the Spaniards to the low ebb at which they have so long remained.

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“ them an increase of inhabitants, industry and riches. This capital,
“ which enjoyed the blessings of peace under Elizabeth, cultivated
“ likewise the liberal arts, which are the badges and consequences of
“ plenty. In a word, London was enlarged, civilized and embellished;
“ and, in a short time, one half of the little island of Great Britain
“ was able to counterbalance the whole power of Spain. The English
“ now figured as the second nation in the world in industry, as in
“ liberty they were the first; and a private merchant in London, Sir
“ Thomas Gresham, was rich enough to build the Royal Exchange
“ at his own expence, and to found and endue a college for the edu-
“ cation of the children of his fellow citizens.”

WE must now recur to some of the principles of commerce we derived from the ancients, and observe how the application of them (by the wise and active ministers and counsellors of Elizabeth) operated towards establishing the extensive commerce of England.

CARTHAGE established colonies, so did ENGLAND, under the glorious administration of Elizabeth. Sir Walter Raleigh made several discoveries in America, which were improved in the time of James I; when several settlements were accomplished in the sugar and tobacco islands. The success of these encouraged other adventurers; and by this means, in process of time, we effected settlements in every part of the American world; which increased our shipping, extended our navigation, and became one of the sources of that immense power and opulence which has enabled Great Britain, within these last twenty years, to establish a most formidable marine; to raise supplies for carrying on the most expensive wars; and yet, even in the midst of the vast operations of hostile enterprize, to extend and improve that commerce to which she is indebted for her national strength.

PLANTATIONS, or colonies, are undoubtedly a principal cause of enriching this nation; and we are indebted to antiquity for this element of commerce. We shall hereafter examine accurately, in its proper place, by what means each of our colonies distinctly contributes to the general benefit of Great Britain.

THE establishment of a maritime force for the protection of navigation, was deemed, by the ancients, one of the grand principles of

commerce. Elizabeth adopted this maxim, and kept up a maritime power so formidable as to awe her enemies and protect the trade of her subjects. Her fleets were almost every where victorious, and her admirals, Drake and Cavendish, sailed round the world, attacking in their progress the Spaniards, who had extended their conquests and trade to the extremities of the globe. At length, her maritime force grew so formidable, that the English fleet attacked Philip the II^d on his own coasts, burnt the city of Cadiz, and on the accession of his successor, Philip the III^d, they defeated the first fleet he sent to sea.

At this æra, the English gained a superiority on the ocean, which has ever since been preserved to the British flag; on the support of which, not only our commercial interests, but our independent existence as a nation depends. “The successes of Elizabeth at sea,” says a commercial writer *, “made seamen; her success in trade made merchants: “to say the truth, her subjects were fired with new thoughts; and “some of her principal nobility and gentry commenced merchant-adventurers, and engaged in mercantile associations, which laid the “foundation of public trading companies; some commanded ships; “some planted colonies; some supplied stock; some ventured their “lives; some their estates; but almost all, in general, contributed “something. From the war with Spain, the seamen returned enriched with the plunder of whole fleets, and not only benefited “themselves, but the whole nation. This made people run to sea, “as country folks do to a fair; and the multitude of ships and seamen “grew so great in England, that her fleets were said to cover the seas, “and the queen reigned as it were mistress of the ocean;” nor was she ever reduced to the necessity of exerting the cruel power of pressing seamen; for her people were so animated by the example of their sovereign, and the good fortune of their fellow subjects, that men crowded into the service, not only from all parts of her own dominions, but from every country in Europe sailors resorted to England; and whatever adventure was on foot, public or private, they were sure never to want hands. Thus, by exerting her naval strength against Spain, she

* De Foe's Plan of the English Commerce.

increased

increased it; and rendered her marine force at the same time sufficiently formidable to protect her subjects in their new trade, and settlements in America.

TREATIES OF COMMERCE with different nations make a part of its principles, and were not unknown to the ancients, though they have been more frequent and better regulated by the moderns; they are strictly necessary; for without them, commerce cannot be carried on with any degree of safety.

ELIZABETH (after the discoveries made by her subjects in America, and the settling of some plantations there) took every measure to make the commerce of her subjects universal, and to place it on a secure footing: for this purpose, she engaged in treaties of amity and commerce with several considerable foreign powers; in virtue of which treaties, she established factories in their dominions, and increased the commercial connections and correspondence of her subjects in every quarter of the world.

HER first embassy, on this account, was to the Great Duke of Muscovy, from whom she obtained stipulations for allowing a certain number of merchants to transport their merchandise through his extensive dominions to Persia, where they carried woollen cloths, kerseys, bays, &c. The merchants carrying on this trade, formed afterwards a new plan of commerce with Muscovy itself, sending to England from thence, iron and hemp; and thus laid the foundation of the Russia Company at London.

IN the next place, she concluded a treaty of peace and commerce with Solyman the Magnificent, emperor of the Turks. The English merchants, on the strength of this treaty, fitted out ships laden with English commodities, and the woollen manufactures in particular, for several parts of Turkey; and established factories at Constantinople, Aleppo, and Smyrna, where a flourishing commerce has been carried on by the English ever since, and this gave birth to the Turkey Company.

THE trade carried on to the Gold Coasts of Africa, from which we have since derived such advantages for our Colonies, by the purchase of SLAVES, was likewise commenced at this æra; and at length, the
merchants.

merchants carrying on this trade were incorporated into a society called The African Company.

BUT the most interesting, and, at this day, the most flourishing trading society in the whole world, the British East India company, also owes its origin to this ever memorable period; for, on the 31st day of December, 1600, queen Elizabeth granted a charter to George earl of Cumberland, and to two hundred and fifteen knights, aldermen and merchants, incorporating them into one body politic and corporate, by the name of *The governor and company of merchants of London trading to the East Indies*, empowering them to elect a governor, deputy-governor, and twenty-four persons, annually, to form a committee; enabling them to purchase lands without limitation, and according them, a variety of privileges and immunities, such as, exemption from customs for the first four years, &c. &c. and, on the strength of this charter, the members raised among themselves the sum of seventy-two thousand pounds, which was applied to building of ships, and other necessary services, but was not thrown into one general fund, or capital stock, only each member furnished a quota, according to his circumstances and inclination of adventuring, to be disposed of under the direction of the governor and of the committee. However, in 1613, they formed a joint capital, and this very East India company subsisted, under various vicissitudes, till the year 1708, when it was lost in the creation of the present establishment of the Honourable, the united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies.

HERE then we may note the effects of another principle of commerce.

THE incorporating of societies of merchants, for carrying on any particular commerce, requiring a large capital, and which could never be undertaken by individuals, with equal advantage either to themselves or to the state.

BUT as several objections are urged against this principle, the first we have advanced that is liable to dispute, this article shall be resumed and discussed before we finally close our subject.

To complete the records of these most glorious annals, we have still in reserve, a most signal improvement for the benefit and security of
of

of commerce, which was the appointing a regular court, to hear and determine all causes relative to assurance or insurance of ships and merchandise, which had been left before to private, and often arbitrary decisions, whereby the insured suffered great hardships, which were totally prevented by this measure.

THIS court consisted of the judge of the admiralty, the recorder of London, two doctors of the civil law, two common lawyers, and eight merchants of the first repute. It was constituted by commission annually, issued by the lord-chancellor under the great seal; appeals lay from this court to the court of Chancery; upon depositing the sum decreed against the appellant by the court of assurance in their hands, the bill in chancery to be filed within two months after the decree. No underwriter, nor assured person, was allowed to be a commissioner.

IT is remarkable, that, besides the grievance of arbitrary private decisions, it is assigned, in the preamble of the act of parliament for establishing this commission, as one reason for the establishment, "that assurers had drawn the parties assured to seek their moneys in "her majesty's courts of law, to their great charges and delay;" yet we have returned to this practice again; for causes respecting assurances, if I am rightly informed, are now tried in the King's-bench.

THOUGH the reign of this illustrious queen was the longest of any female reign we have any account of in history; yet, considering the advantages derived from her prudent, vigorous, and intelligent administration, to latest posterity, we cannot but lament for her the brevity of human life, and express a fruitless wish, that she had lived to view the successes which attended all those glorious plans we have just recited.

THE good queen died on the 24th of March, 1603, and the East India fleet returned from its first successful voyage only in the month of September following.

BUT though the issue of her generous concern for the prosperity of the nation, could not be seen, nor the advantages be reaped from them till future ages, yet a noble lesson is to be drawn from this reign for all legislators. "To lay the foundation, and secure the commercial

“ interests of their people to remote periods, though the success of the
“ measures they take for this purpose should not be immediately visible,
“ and even tho’ some apparent difficulties and disadvantages may arise
“ from them, during their own short period of existence : monarchs,
“ ministers, and senators, must seek to perpetuate their fame, not to in-
“ dulse their ambition and vanity, by confining themselves merely to
“ such limited scenes of action, as terminate during their lives, and are
“ often performed with a view only to temporary applause.”

THE general Elements of Commerce hitherto pointed out, will, I hope, appear clear and evident, and as well connected as the nature of our subject will admit; for, as we are to establish a set of uncontrollable principles, it became necessary, as they arose, to explain and illucidate them by historical anecdotes; and thus, principles being already taken up, which must be again applied to different parts of our subject, till the whole is completed, must necessarily occasion some few repetitions, which, as they are unavoidable, I hope will need no further apology.

I SHALL endeavour now to connect, arrange, and apply them, in proper order, to the present state of our inland trade and foreign commerce; introducing, as I proceed, such principles as are of modern date, and have tended to carry both to a degree of perfection they never could attain in ancient times.

P A R T III.

HAVING clearly proved, in the preceding pages, that inland trade was founded on the simple principle of barter, or the mutual exchanges of the necessaries and conveniencies of life; that this, in after times, gave rise to the art of navigation; and that, by means of this art, foreign commerce was established in different countries, in the early ages of the world; and having also historically traced the progress of universal commerce, till we have happily settled it in our own country, on a firm and extensive basis:

THE order of our subject now requires, that we should deduce the origin, mark the progress, and point out the present state of those arts and manufactures, which, after having operated the effects of the first principle of trade, in supplying our mutual wants by means of barter at home, have furnished us with such excesses, or superfluous quantities, that we have been enabled to carry them, on advantageous terms, to foreign markets, thereby continually encreasing our foreign commerce, as well as the relative strength and riches of the nation.

AND here it will be necessary to attend very closely to our subject, and accurately to note the principles on which their prosperity depends; for a British senator cannot be too well informed of the situation of our arts and manufactures, so far as they contribute to the flourishing state of our foreign commerce, which alone can support the best of constitutions; especially as it is universally allowed, that we are a maritime commercial state, and have no other means to maintain our present power and influence in Europe, but what we derive from the prosperous state of our commerce.

THE STOCK in TRADE, with which any nation sets up a foreign commerce, must consist of the produce of the soil, and the labour of the people.

THE produce of the soil forms the natural riches of a nation.

THE labour of the people, the acquired or relative wealth of a state*.

AGRICULTURE, in all its branches (that is, the art of improving land, so as to render it as fertile as possible,) is the proper means of encreasing the natural riches of any nation; and it is the parent of all other arts.

THE USEFUL ARTS and MANUFACTURES are the means of augmenting the acquired riches of a state, by the most profitable exertions of the labour of the people.

THE LIBERAL and POLITE ARTS embellish society, and sometimes are carried to such perfection, that they likewise contribute to the relative riches of nations. But as this does not generally nor frequently happen in any great degree, it is necessary to draw the line of distinction between these and the useful, which are, in general, the mechanic arts.

To begin at the fountain-head.

* Land and labour together are the sources of all wealth;—without a competency of land there would be no subsistence, and but a very poor one without labour: so that wealth or riches consist either in a property in land, or in the products of land and labour.

Harris's Essay upon Money and Coins, Part I. including the Theory of Commerce.

ON

ON AGRICULTURE.

BEFORE we enter on the discussion of this important subject, I must take the liberty to introduce a few miscellaneous remarks of an anonymous writer, who has lately published a volume of letters on the present state of the French nation, with a compleat comparison between FRANCE and GREAT BRITAIN in every point of view*.

“ I FLATTER myself you will think me guilty of no impropriety, in giving AGRICULTURE the pre-eminence, in my view of the present state of France. In all kingdoms this first and original art, this foundation of all others, must be pursued and encouraged, or the rest will be faint and languid.

“ AGRICULTURE being the only sure dependence of any people, those who depend most on it are in the most certain road. It ought therefore to be the policy of wise states not only to give encouragement to husbandry, but to place their dependence on it, by acting in such a manner, that their safety or happiness may not be endangered by the loss of any thing else.

“ A DEPENDENCE upon commerce at large, without distinction, never was, nor ever can be, in any degree comparable to that upon cultivation; it is far more fluctuating, more open to rivalry of neighbours, and even liable to almost total destruction; whereas the very contrary is the case with agriculture; and, in respect to the trade that proceeds from it, even that, of all commerce whatever, is the most secure; for the sale of absolute necessaries will ever be more sure than that of superfluities.

* London, printed for W. Nicoll, 1771.

“ WHEREVER

“ WHEREVER great numbers of people have existed, we may take
 “ it for granted agriculture has been followed; for without it they
 “ could not live.”

THE following sentiment does equal honour to the humanity and good sense of this unknown author.

“ IT is one of the most melancholy reflections humanity can suggest,
 “ that the records of mankind are filled with miserable butcheries,
 “ while the cultivation of the earth is scarcely mentioned. A few
 “ pages would give us a complete compilation of the history of agri-
 “ culture, which feeds mankind;---millions of volumes are filled with
 “ the art of war, which destroys them : such are the cruel prejudices
 “ of this world !”

AGRICULTURE increases population; and the multiplication of people, augments the acquired riches of a nation, in proportion to the quantity of labour. Agriculture, therefore, considered as the basis of multiplication of the people, ought to be the first object of attention in every civilized state. It is supposed the spontaneous fruits of the earth always produced a sufficient fund of nourishment for mankind; but when to this was added the exertions of labour, aiding the vigour of different soils, a superfluity, or redundancy, was the consequence; and the disposal of this superfluity, by way of barter, was the only use that could be made of it in the earliest ages of the world, before general commerce was introduced. But since the universality of commerce among the nations of the earth, the soil of most countries has been made to produce more than is sufficient for the purposes of the simple inland trade arising out of barter. The soil of Great Britain, in particular, after supplying our mutual wants at home, becomes a very considerable object of foreign commerce. Just the same effect is produced by the ingenuity, industry, and labour of the people; after supplying the necessities and conveniencies of life at home, the labours of artists and manufacturers are sent abroad, and the acquired riches of the nation are thereby continually increasing.

THE care, trouble and risk of transporting these to foreign climes centers with the merchant, who is actuated to exert his commercial

good

good offices by a principle of gain, on the balance of his exchange of articles, in the course of his transactions between different countries; and this is also the reward he expects for the general utility of his undertaking to society. But the merchant, who generally resides in capitals or sea-ports, must have his intermediate agents or factors in the different provinces of a kingdom. These are very often country shop-keepers and dealers, who have cut short the operation of ancient barter, by the introduction of another agent, termed *money*, which has also enlarged the first principle of barter, and constituted a general inland trade, which we term *buying* and *selling*. These dealers or shop-keepers purchase with money the superfluous quantity of grain the husbandman has produced beyond what he can either consume or dispose of in simple barter. The same is done with respect to the labours of artists and manufacturers; and thus a connection and regular gradation is kept up between the husbandman, the artist, the manufacturer, the shop-keeper, dealer, factor, and the merchant; and, in the following order, their utility to the state, in their respective characters, seems to be precisely determined.

THE husbandman, by his skill, increases the produce of the soil. The natural effect of the abundance of the productions of the earth is the multiplication of the human species. Population, again, increases the same productions, by an additional quantity of labour; and the same happens with respect to the arts and manufactures; a superfluity being the consequence in every branch. This must be circulated internally, in a certain proportion, which creates a number of shop-keepers and retail traders, who live by the profits arising from buying and selling; for they buy in quantities, at a cheap rate, what they retail in small proportions, for the convenience of individuals; and this profit is an indemnification for sundry losses in the division, admeasurement, &c. of the commodities bought in gross, many of them being subject to perish, diminish, and waste; and also a recompence for their attendance on this business of buying and selling. Thus the inland trade of a country is established; and before we proceed to extend this to the introduction of foreign commerce, I would beg leave to point out in a
familiar

familiar instance the difference between the ancient, limited, awkward operations of simple barter, and the convenient extensive transactions of inland trade, derived from that simple principle.

THE husbandman is not any longer obliged, being possessed of five hundred sacks of wheat, to exchange them with as many families, who may have occasion for each a sack; this tedious and painful operation is removed by the merchant, who, by means of his agents or factors, purchases the whole quantity, either with money, or on his credit, (another grand principle of commerce, on which we shall enlarge in its proper place): nor is the same husbandman obliged to run up and down in search of every artificer, artist, or manufacturer, to furnish him implements, cloaths, and other necessaries, for himself and family. The inland trader, or retail shop-keeper, furnishes him a variety of articles together, in such quantities as suit his demand; and, as the shop-keeper is perhaps already supplied with grain sufficient for the food of his family, he necessarily pays him for these articles with a part of the money he has received of the merchant's agent for his wheat.

Now while we supposed the husbandman supplying himself with cloaths from the clothier, and with implements of husbandry from the mechanic artist, and making a return to them in grain or cattle, for food; and men in general seeking to supply their mutual wants from the very hands of the persons employed in the several branches of industry and labour capable of supplying them; the use of money, or of shop-keepers, agents, and merchants, was unknown, and very often the superfluous product of the soil perished, being totally unprofitable.

THE overplus, beyond the demands for internal circulation, renders the class of men called *agents*, *factors*, or *brokers*, extremely useful; these being dispersed, like the shop-keepers, throughout the different provinces of a kingdom, and being finally connected with the merchants, who take upon them the trouble and risk of exporting the superfluous product of the earth, and of the labour of the people, which tends ultimately to the enriching themselves, and the whole nation.

BUT

BUT the merchant cannot perform this operation for the benefit of himself and his fellow-citizens, but by means of another set of men, whom we shall distinguish by the general titles of *navigators* and *seamen*.

NOR is this sufficient; for, after having laden his ships with the natural produce or manufactures of his country, he must, in time of war, receive additional support from the state. A maritime force must be kept on foot, to escort and protect his merchandise to the destined port, and to secure it from all attempts of the enemy.

MONSIEUR DESLANDES, in his address to the Count de Maurepas, secretary of state to the French monarch, in the year 1743, observes, “ That a strong naval force is the pillar and support of the state ; that
“ when it is numerous, and under a proper regulation, it will be able
“ to give law to all Europe; the state will be secure, it will have
“ nothing to fear; its commerce will be extensive, profitable, and
“ unmolested.”

THUS the several classes of men just described, unite or combine to set the busy world in motion, and to encourage industrious nations, by circulating the natural wealth of the world; to raise to themselves a new species of riches, which the state of nature was unacquainted with, but which is found to enhance the value of life, by ameliorating its enjoyments, and refining its pleasures.

As the riches I have in view are known under the general denomination of MONEY, it becomes necessary in this place, (though I shall enlarge on this material subject, when treating of public credit and coin, under the head of FINANCES) just to mention, that whatever is established, by the authority of any nation, to be the medium of their mutual exchanges with each other, in the course of traffic, is properly, the money of a nation.

IT may therefore consist of gold, silver, and copper coin; or of paper; as bank-notes, bills of exchange, promissory notes and bonds; all of them answering one and the same purpose, viz. GENERAL CIRCULATION.

THE produce of the soil of Great Britain consists of CORN, WOOD, COALS, TIN, LEAD, COPPER, IRON, SALT, FISH *, WOOL, LEATHER, ALLUMN, and LAPIS CALLIMANARIS; to which we must add the produce of our plantations or colonies, these having the same effect on the state of our commerce as the articles of home growth; they are TOBACCO, SUGARS, COFFEE, GINGER, RUM, COTTON, MAHOGANY, TIMBER, IRON, SILK, FURS, RICE, INDIGO, MELASSES, TURPENTINE, POT-ASH, WAX, PIMENTO, and several other spices and drugs.

THE amazing extent of foreign commerce, arising from the exportation of the sundry articles enumerated as the produce of the soil of Great Britain, either in their natural or manufactured, improved state; and from the importation and re-exportation of the produce of our colonies and settlements abroad, is a proof, that our general notions of commerce are just, however we may deviate from its true principles in some particulars, which shall be pointed out, in their proper place.

THE first general principle of a trading nation, with respect to its internal polity, must be the employment of a sufficient number of hands, in producing the necessaries of life in such quantities, that there may be plenty for the general consumption of the inhabitants, and a surplus of some to export to foreign climes, to be exchanged, through the good offices of the merchant, for an equivalent in specie, or merchandize, on advantageous terms.

THE most ample encouragement imaginable must therefore be given to AGRICULTURE; for this we have already shewn to be the most ancient principle of commerce, which has never varied in any age, or in any clime, that would admit of its being reduced to practice. One of the most politic and profitable encouragements ever given to agriculture is of modern date, and was first adopted as a principle of commerce by the British parliament in the year 1689. I mean, the bounty on the exportation of corn, which has given a new life and spirit to husbandry,

* This article, though not strictly the produce of the earth, yet being taken on the seas, chiefly within the territorial jurisdiction of Great Britain, at home, and in its colonies, must be considered as forming part of the natural riches of the state.

has brought considerable riches into England, and has contributed to raise the value of lands above one third. By means of this encouragement, the farmer is animated to exert his best skill and labour, in aiding the natural vigour of the soil, to procure a commodity which he is sure to vend on advantageous terms, either for home consumption, or for exportation.

BEFORE this memorable period, England, like many other countries, had followed the spirit of the Roman laws, with respect to the article of grain; laws highly impolitic, and incompatible with the present state of Europe, divided, as it is, into a number of states, whose interests are diametrically opposite to each other; whereas Rome, mistress of the world, could have no balance of trade to calculate with her own provinces. Besides, she exhausted them by the weight of tributes, and the avarice of her prefects; so that, if Rome had not been obliged to restore to her provinces and colonies, the value of the necessities she extracted from them, she must have swallowed up the treasures of the universe, in the same manner as she usurped its empire. Till this grand principle was happily introduced into our system of police, we had frequently been obliged to have recourse, for the grain necessary for subsistence, to foreign states, sometimes even to our rivals in commerce, and natural enemies the French; and had likewise often experienced those fatal revolutions in the prices, which by turns discourage the husbandman, or distract the mass of the people. POLAND, DENMARK, AFRICA, and SICILY, were the public granaries of Europe, at the time this beneficial alteration took place. The policy of these states, who laid no restraint on the commerce of grain, and their constant plenty, though some of them neither enjoyed domestic tranquillity, nor a good constitution, served, no doubt, to open the eyes of our government to the true interests of the people, and to give them reason to hope, that the greatest advantages might be derived from it, in a state where the public tranquillity had just been secured, and its excellent constitution established on a firm basis, by a glorious revolution. In short, this was the happy crisis for the introduction of a principle which was liable to objections and opposition,

from the prejudices which custom had introduced, and private interest ratified. It was necessary the people should have that confidence in government, without which the best regulations prove abortive, essentially necessary for surmounting a very great obstacle to this new regulation. A foreign commerce in corn supposed a full liberty to store it, for as long time as the owner should think proper; a liberty which ignorance and obstinacy had rendered odious to the nation: the very notion of keeping granaries before this time would have excited a sedition; but the people happily had the requisite confidence in the new administration, which crowned this bold but salutary measure with success.

THE bounty soon enabled us to be competitors, in this valuable branch of commerce, with the most fertile countries of Europe; and changed the popular ideas concerning this trade, and the keeping corn in granaries, for the most favourable opportunity of exporting it.

THE wisdom of the legislature at the same time put a check to the pernicious operations of avarice, by limiting this bounty to certain prices.

THUS, if wheat exceeds forty-eight shillings per quarter in our public markets, the bounty is suspended, because it has got above the price at which the industrious artist and manufacturer, and the poorer sort of labouring people, ought to be supplied with it; and this price certainly denotes a scarcity, arising either from a succession of bad seasons, previous exports of too great quantities, or clandestine monopolies, formed by combinations among interested factors, to hoard up considerable quantities in private granaries, till an artificial scarcity is brought on, and the price raised to the gratification of their avaricious views.

A REAL scarcity in England (owing to the very great demands from many parts of Europe, but particularly from Italy, where the corn failed in the years 1764, 1765, and 1766, followed, unfortunately, by bad seasons here) brought the wisdom of this measure of allowing bounties on the exportation of corn into dispute, and various writings were published on both sides of the question. The detail of this contest would be endless; the result of the whole is, that the commercial advantages

advantages to a trading nation, derived from this measure, remain self-evident; the utmost that has been alledged against it amounting to no more than to prove, that this benefit, like many others, has been abused, and that due care ought to be taken by the government to examine into the real stock of corn in the kingdom, as often as it approaches the price at which the bounty stops; and to take special care, after a necessary suspension of the bounty for some time, to be well assured, that there is plenty for a long season in hand, before the bounty is permitted again to take place. These precautions premised, the wisdom of the British parliament, in granting this bounty, stands unimpeached, and is a noble commercial principle.

BESIDES, the event has justified the measure; for, till the late scarcity obliged us even to import foreign corn, (perhaps to re-import some of our own, for the exportation of which the bounty had been paid), the balance of our trade with Holland, and some other countries, was considerably increased, by means of our exportations of corn.

THE general state of the exportation of grain since the bounty, will put the matter out of doubt, by shewing the very great degree in which this commerce augments the relative riches of a nation. The detail of long accounts is unnecessary here: it will fully answer our purpose to note, from our best writers, and the most authentic computations, that the bounty paid as a spur to industry, and an encouragement to the husbandman to aid the natural vigour of the soil, by every art which may render it most productive of so valuable an article of commerce as corn, amounted, for a number of years, from an hundred and fifty, to five hundred thousand pounds sterling; which is so much money thrown into circulation, to the advantage of arts, manufactures, and inland trade.

From 1746 to 1750, near six millions of quarters of grain of different qualities were exported; and the sums brought into the kingdom in return are computed at eight millions sterling. We also find that when our exports were largest, wheat was at the lowest price.

Now let us add the advantage arising to navigation: Almost all this great quantity of corn was exported in English bottoms, the freight of which

which is another clear gain of a very considerable sum ; for the purchaser or consumer ultimately pays this charge, in an advanced price upon every commodity ; and if we likewise take into the account the employment given annually, during the years just mentioned, to at least one hundred and fifty thousand men, by this operation, we shall find that we have the most irrefragable proofs of the national benefits of this bounty. A principle so well supported by facts appears to me irreproachable ; but I will not deny that there may be some faults in the execution of this, as there most commonly are in that of the best laws.

WITH respect to the internal effect of this commercial principle on agriculture, (the encouragement of which we have shewn to be the first essential object of all wise governments) it appears, by the best calculations, that the price of wheat for ninety-one years before the bounty was established, was much higher, on an average, than it has been for the eighty years that have elapsed since the period when the bounty took place ; so that accidental scarcity is not to be imputed to the bounty.

THE British parliament has therefore, properly speaking, introduced a new principle into commerce : the effect of it, in one instance, we have demonstrated ; but its operations become still more successful as they are more general. When we look into the present state of our mechanic arts and manufactures, we find the effect of bounties has been wonderful indeed ! especially in the linen and silk manufactures. The bare mentioning the present flourishing situation of the linen manufactures in IRELAND and SCOTLAND, and of the mechanic and polite arts in ENGLAND, since the institution of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, is sufficient to remind us of the utility of bounties.

NOR can I quit this theme, without paying the tribute of just praise to that laudable foundation, which even a French writer declares, “ is more beneficial to this nation than all the royal, pompous establishments of academies at Paris.”

YET, in justice to those who object to the continuation of bounties, after the purpose for which they were granted is effected, I must observe,

that the paying bounties and premiums on arts and manufactures, when they are so thoroughly established, by means of the encouragement given them in their infant-state, as to be very profitable to the inventors, proprietors, or managers, is like keeping the leading-strings on a child after it is strong enough to run alone. I am even ready to admit this to have been the case with respect to the bounty on corn; provided the declaimers against it will not attack a principle incontrovertible in itself, merely on account of some defects in its application in the course of a long series of years.

THE end proposed by the government at the institution of this bounty, was the encouragement of tillage, the procuring of abundance, and introducing a beneficial branch of commerce, which should draw considerable sums into this kingdom from foreign nations. But this end obtained, it is certainly incumbent on the present government to take care that its own subjects should not eat the product of their land dearer than the subjects of foreign nations, to whom she exports her corn; and when corn is cheaper in England than at foreign markets, so that no nation in Europe can be our competitors in this commerce, the profits on exportation will be a sufficient inducement, without the bounty.

ON POPULATION.

THE natural effect of AGRICULTURE is POPULATION, the promotion of which is a fixed element of commerce.

SIR JAMES STEUART, an excellent modern author, observes *,
 “ That mankind have been as to numbers, and must ever be, in proportion to the food produced; and that the food produced will be
 “ in the compound proportion of the fertility of the climate, and the
 “ industry of the inhabitants.” It follows therefore, that where the climate and soil are unfavourable, there must depend on the industry of the inhabitants, and consequently a greater number of hands will be necessary for the cultivation of the earth. If then population does not keep pace with agriculture, it is plain there must be some striking defect somewhere in our political œconomy. I am sorry to say this is the case at present in England. Of late years we have most unhappily lost sight of the grand principle of POPULATION, so essential to the success of INLAND TRADE, the source of FOREIGN COMMERCE.

OUR lands, it is true, are cultivated, but not in the most beneficial manner for a commercial state, though the profit may be greater to individuals.

THE vast increase of pasture-lands must strike every accurate observer, and convince him, that more attention is paid at present to the breeding of HORSES than to the multiplication of the human species; so that there is very little prospect that such quantities of wheat (the standard food for mankind) will be produced, for any length of time, as will

* Inquiry into the Principles of Political Œconomy, vol. i. London, printed for T. Cadell, 1767.

give room to revive the bounty on this article. We may be told that horses are an article of inland trade, and even of exportation ; but, alas ! this will by no means compensate for a decrease of population, which becomes more and more visible upon every occasion, when any great numbers of men are wanted to be called forth for the public service ; if they are raised at all, it is with the utmost difficulty, and every art and manufacture in the kingdom feels the want of them.

BESIDES, our lands may always be employed to much better purpose in raising the first materials for our manufactures. We are said to purchase madder of the Dutch, to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds annually, it being a very essential article in the important businesses of dying and callico-printing, in which they are our rivals, and therefore have raised the price of this commodity to us. The cultivation of this plant, a native of England, would save the nation much more than it can possibly gain by the exportation of horses. The same may be said with respect to hemp, which we mostly import from Russia ; yet the cultivation of these articles would be profitable as well as useful to the state.

IT seems to be a fatal mistake, that the proportion between the two branches of husbandry, tillage and feeding, is not fixed by some act of the legislature ; for it is but too visible, that the inclosing of lands only to increase pasturage, and the shameful practice now prevailing, of tying down tenants not to plow their land, or sow it with corn, must prove highly detrimental to population, arts, manufactures, and commerce. Extensive fields, that formerly gave employment to hundreds of those robust useful people called *husbandmen*, and on which many poor cottagers dwelt, are now in the possession of some monopolizing grazier, and overlooked by a solitary shepherd. This strange abuse in the management of our lands, joined to the engrossing of farms, must hasten our ruin, if not timely remedied. I dread most sincerely the fatal consequences of one very bad harvest. Certain it is, that if the present avaricious plan proceeds much farther, we shall lose an eighth part at least of the number of our people ; and with this decrease of

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population, there will be a proportionable diminution of manufactures, of inland trade, and of general commerce.

It may be urged, that emigrations to our colonies, and new possessions, since the peace, occasion that apparent thinness of inhabitants, observable in all parts of the kingdom, except the capital. But let us ask this question in return, what has been the chief cause of these emigrations? Not any extraordinary temptations from abroad, but dreadful discouragements at home. An instinct, a desire to propagate his species, is inherent in man; but there is a sentiment of pain and sorrow accompanies the very idea of pleasure in this case, to a mind capable of the least reflection, when no probable prospect appears that the pregnant female shall be in so good a situation as the birds of the air; not so much as provided with a warm nest;---pardon the expression;---but such is the homely cottage to the humble peasant; nor yet with the means of giving food and raiment to her helpless offspring: while the numerous agents of planters and settlers in our colonies, and the emissaries of foreign princes, offer these comforts at least; and while they can be had, the poor youth of both sexes will go in search of them, though it be to some arid clime, beneath the torrid zone.

POPULATION is so great an object to this, and indeed to every trading, maritime power, that I must intreat your patience, while I expatiate at large on its present declining state.

In the public news-papers in 1768, the following extract was given from the register of a parish in a considerable county in England. "From the year 1542 to 1560, there were 36 marriages, christenings, and burials, in the parish of *****, in the county of *****," (I am sorry the name of the parish and county was not given); "and, in the same parish, from 1755 to 1765, there were no more than four."

I WILL not waste the time in shewing, by progressive multiplication, what the number of people in this parish might have been in the present year 1771, provided due care had been taken to find proper employment for the poor, and to let them habitations on easy terms; it is sufficient to inform you, that neither the sword nor pestilence has prevailed

prevailed in this and many such parishes ; but a worse scourge from Heaven ; flinty-hearted, or prodigal, luxurious landlords, have swept away the inhabitants. The account annexed to this extract farther sets forth, “ That most of the small tenements and farms having fallen
“ into the lord of the manor’s hands, he has let the whole to one or
“ two substantial farmers ; and the village now resembles a place that
“ has been sacked and plundered, there being above fifty dwelling-
“ houses and cots uninhabited, and falling into ruins.”

To confirm this relation, and to shew that this must be the case all over England, we need only refer to that celebrated performance, *Considerations on the Trade and Finances of the Kingdom, &c.* published in the year 1766, supposed to be written under the direction of the late Mr. Grenville ; wherein we are told the number of houses in England and Wales, from 1759 to that year, had decreased five thousand seven hundred and ninety ; including in the account all the new buildings about Westminster, and every where else. Most other writers of credit, of late years, have been likewise of opinion, that population decreases considerably in this kingdom *.

IN a commercial state, where a sufficient quantity of hands are wanting for agriculture, the useful arts and manufactures, for navigation, and to furnish a considerable military force in time of war, what excuse can that man make to his country, who, by depriving the poorer sort of all the prospect of the common conveniencies of life, such as a fixed habitation and employment, prevents marriage, and perhaps occasions many, who have not been bred up to any branch of trade or of the manufactures, to wander from their respective countries, to engage in servile offices, of little or no use to the state, in comparison of the husbandman, or to go abroad ? To add to the evil of engrossing farms, a false spirit of emulation is set up amongst the farmers, and they are tempted to bid against each other daily, for new leases, till

* IN the twenty-fifth year of Henry the eighth, this iniquity of monopolizing farms, raising old rents, knocking down cottages, ejecting poor villagers, thereby preventing the breed of fowls, pigs, &c. was got to such a height, that an act was passed to prevent any man holding above two farms in one parish, one of which he was obliged to reside in.

the rent of almost every estate in the kingdom is doubled: And who are to pay this advanced price?---The consumers of all sorts of provisions.

EQUALLY detrimental to population is the disposal of the incomes arising from rack-rents. They are remitted to the land-holders, who generally reside in the metropolis; and, indeed, here the great evil arises. Formerly our worthy ancestors resided the greatest part of the year on their estates; and, if a bad season, sickness, or any casualty, distressed their little tenants, they had souls open to the feelings of humanity and benevolence, and, by their frugality and temperance, they were enabled to excuse or forgive (these were the terms of those days) half a year, or a year's rent. But, at present, this charitable disposition, supposing it to subsist, has no room to operate. The great landholder is far removed from his country-mansion; he lives luxuriously in the capital; and that his income may be always in readiness for the calls of sportive pleasure and high living, his lands are all let to substantial farmers, who will not plead poverty, sickness, or any other casualty for delay of rent, but will punctually supply the sinking fund in his banker's or agent's hands at London.

As to the complaint that old English hospitality is banished, it re-sounds from all parts; and how should it be otherwise, when, after doubling his rents, and turning away all the industrious poor from his estate, a gentleman of one thousand pounds per annum cannot keep so good an house as his ancestors did with half the income; nor, for the short time he passes in the country, make so good a figure, or be so liberal to the few poor neighbours left in his parish, as an opulent grazier, or monopolizing farmer? The reason is clear; the conductors of public amusements, stock-jobbers, fiddlers, hair-dressers, in short a whole group of useless slaves of luxury, many of them foreigners, who surround his family, absorb that portion of his income which is not expended for absolute necessity, and he only retires to the country to recruit; not to let its industrious peasants enjoy any part of that increased revenue, which their hard labour and rack-rents have furnished.

A L A T E

A LATE writer, lamenting the state of France, from the nobility and gentry spending their time at Paris, computes that the twenty-fifth part of the inhabitants of that kingdom reside in that gay capital; but he makes our case worse; for he asserts, that the tenth part of the whole people of England reside at London. I hope, for the honour of humanity, for the sake of population, that grand support of the wealth and power of a maritime state, he exaggerates; yet the great increase of buildings in and about the metropolis, and the deserted state of many large country towns and villages, bespeak it but too true.

THE rents of houses in London are risen, within twenty years, above one third. The rents of houses in country-towns, where there are not any very capital manufactures carried on, are fallen, within the same space of time, above one half.

THE want of that redundancy of live stock, which the poor cottager raised on his small farm, and was obliged to carry to market at a moderate price, as soon as reared, is the occasion of the scarcity and dearth of provisions, so justly complained of for ten years past. The great farmers are better employed for their own account, than in raising poultry, &c. for the markets; and the want of little farmers proves, that the means of settling in life are taken away, and, consequently, that both the numbers of the people, and a proportional quantity of provisions, must be continually decreasing.

WE set out with defining commerce to be a reciprocal communication between men of the necessities of life. This idea alone evidently points out agriculture as the basis of commerce. Population is the fruit of the encouragement given to this parent art, and of the success attending its extensive operations. Maxims of this importance cannot be too often repeated, although they are common, and in every one's mouth. The persuasion of the truth of a principle forms only an imperfect degree of knowledge, if we will not allow it its whole force, and suffer it to influence our conduct. The rough sketch I have drawn of the declining state of population in the country, proves but too clearly, that though the true principles of agriculture and population, politically considered, are well understood, the selfish and mistaken views

views of the land-holders, co-operating with a cool indifference, or at best a lukewarmness for the general welfare of their country, has prevailed so universally, that they are rejected in practice, though respected in theory.

WHEN the proprietor of lands and his tenants come to have separate interests, and the former is regardless of the condition of the latter, provided he can only raise the value of his estate by the sweat of the labourer's brow, the husbandman may still continue to toil in the furrow; (for men, from the very idea of preservation, inseparably attached to their existence, will pursue that occupation which will provide for their most urgent wants) but this done, the restraints and burdens he finds himself under will discourage and dishearten him to that degree, that he will not exert his best abilities, so to improve the land, as that it may produce a surplus, for the purposes of commerce. If he has not the least prospect in view of ameliorating his estate, of enjoying some ease and satisfaction in his humble sphere, of settling comfortably, and providing decently for a family, all his industry will center in himself, and he will take no further concern upon himself than to acquire food and raiment for his own person. Thus population stagnates; and the nation, where such prejudices and passions take root, insensibly recurs back to an infant state of agriculture and commerce, by one of those revolutions to which even the best human institutions are liable.

I WILL not dwell on the evils arising from a decrease of population; the bare mention of the most obvious and fatal consequences will be sufficient to shew the necessity of altering our conduct, and setting on foot some laudable plan to increase the numbers of our people, which do not now bear a due proportion to the number of acres of soil, neither are they sufficient for the security and defence of the state, in times of public calamity, such as the invasion of a foreign enemy, or a civil war.

THE consequences of a decrease of population to the state must be the decline of its maritime power; because, in this case, it will be impossible to furnish her a proper number of seamen. The diminution
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of her maritime force necessarily brings on a decay of commerce, for want of due protection on the seas.

ITS manufactures must suffer in the same proportion, from the same cause; a scarcity of hands for carrying them on; so that they will neither be so good in quality, nor so great in quantity.

INLAND TRADE must stagnate in proportion to the diminution of the number of people who should consume its commodities.

FOREIGN COMMERCE, from the badness and high price of the manufactures exported, must decay. All these events must happen, sooner or later, if there is a scarcity of labouring hands in a commercial state.

THE principle of population, therefore, cannot be too strongly enforced; and from whatever causes it may arise, if what I have asserted be found true, that the number of our people is considerably decreased, for the interests of commerce, we cannot be too expeditious in applying a remedy to so great a national evil.

AMONGST other measures, more complicated and liable to objections, the following have been thrown out by different writers on this subject.

A DISTRIBUTION of the uncultivated crown-lands, in small portions, liable to trifling quit-rents.

CONTRIBUTIONS amongst the nobility and gentry, towards erecting small farms on these lands, and supplying young couples of good character with the implements of husbandry.

THE lending small sums to poor artists and manufacturers, on their personal security, to be returned after a certain time, either in specie, or in the produce of their industry, provided always that such persons either were actually married, or engaged to enter into that state, and to settle in a family manner.

LAYING a penalty, or some other restraint, on the immoderate consumption of spirituous liquors, by which so many women and children are destroyed.

OBLIGING gentlemen of rank in every parish to take the charge of administering the poors rates, instead of tradesmen, who, through hurry,
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are inattentive, or through interested views are biaſſed to a partial, or improvident diſtribution of the vaſt ſums collected throughout the kingdom for the relief of our poor.

ERECTING and endowing more hospitals for the maintenance and education of deſerted children, and of ſuch whoſe parents are not able to maintain them, whether legitimate or natural; by which means, peaſants, poor artificers, mechanics, and other indigent and induſtrious people, may have the burden of a large family taken off, and their young children diſpoſed of at an age, when they impede the operations of induſtry, and call off the attention of one or both parents from their ordinary labour to the care of looking after them. Some very reſpectable authors, both ancient and modern, have maintained, that huſbandmen, manufacturers, and retail traders, ſhould never have more than three or four children to provide for, and that all above that number ſhould be reared and educated at the expence of the ſtate, and be conſidered as the children of the public, to whoſe ſervice they would conſequently be devoted; and a maritime, commercial nation can never want employment for them. It has been ſaid, that the ſums now annually collected for the poor's rate, under proper management, would be more than ſufficient to maintain the children exceeding the number of three, in all the families in England, whoſe ſituation ſhould require ſuch relief, till the age when they are capable of gaining their livelihood. If we conſider, that the parents themſelves are often thrown upon the pariſh, through the poverty brought on them by providing for large families, and that they are generally incapable of any labour, ſo that they become a dead weight on their reſpective pariſhes, and that the taking a part of their charge from them, while the parents are able to work, will enable them to ſupport themſelves, and prevent a vaſt number of people, in the decline of life, coming upon the pariſh; I am apt to believe the calculation is juſt, and that the amount of the preſent poor's rate would anſwer for the purpoſe propoſed.

PROVIDING diſpenſaries in every trading and manufacturing town in England, under a careful director, for the diſtribution of drugs and medicines, at the price they are ſold by the chemiſts in London, to
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prevent the lower class of the people from falling into the hands of ignorant empirics, or being impoverished by hungry apothecaries.

THESE are some of the means by which population may be encouraged, and they would cost less than most of our charitable foundations, which are not on so beneficial a footing for the nation. But if, in this age of dissipation, such plans cannot be reduced to practice, our last resource must be, the introduction of mechanical machines universally into our manufactories, of which I shall treat at large under the head of manufactures; or a general, or partial NATURALIZATION, in favour of poor husbandmen, artists, and manufacturers, who may be thereby encouraged to leave inhospitable countries, to settle in this land of freedom, under the benefit of our excellent constitution.

“THE most expeditious way of increasing the number of people, keeping down the price of labour, enforcing industry, and improving our manufactures, when population decreases, is a general naturalization. Nothing, surely, can have a better effect in a state where manufacturing hands are wanted, where quantities of land lie uncultivated, or where labour is scarce and dear, from the idleness and debauchery of the manufacturing populace: for, by opening our arms to foreigners, we should not only improve our own manufactures, but also introduce the manufactures of foreigners, with all their arts and improvements; a spirit of industry and improvement would be created by it, which, besides unanimity among our governors, in regard to the extension and protection of our trade, is all we seem to want, to make us the greatest people in the world.

“A GENERAL naturalization would operate more powerfully and more speedily than any other expedient, towards rendering the state populous, rich, and powerful. Its manufactures would be improved, its commerce extended, and its lands would be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection. But some have asserted, ‘that a general naturalization might produce so great an influx of people, as to render provisions so scarce and dear, that numbers would be starved.’ To this it may be readily replied, that, though provisions might be rendered dearer, by a great increase of people, yet it is morally impossible that a famine
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should happen, or that the poor should be starved in a state enriched by extensive commerce. We have large tracts of land yet uncultivated, and also much land not cultivated to its highest perfection; their improvement would employ a great number of hands, and produce great quantities of provisions. Besides, I can never admit, that the number of people in a state is limited by the produce of the lands, provided the state is enriched by extensive commerce; the contrary of this is proved by the states of Holland, where the produce of the lands, though they are cultivated at a great expence, and to the highest perfection, will not support the inhabitants; and provisions are imported from other states, in exchange for their manufactures. In order to make room for foreigners, the Dutch have taken in, as it were, another element, and great numbers of them live upon the water.

“It appears that England could never suffer by a general naturalization, notwithstanding it has been so violently opposed: on the contrary, all ranks and degrees of men must be benefited by it. The gentry, the clergy, and the farmer, would be benefited by the improvement of the land. Manufactures would be improved and rendered cheaper; which, of course, would encrease our foreign trade, and thereby enrich the manufacturer, the broker, and the merchant; and, in consequence of the great number of ships and sailors constantly employed, our naval force would be the terror of our enemies through the world. The goodness of our laws would not only bring art and industry among us, but many would come and bring great riches with them, if, by a general naturalization, our arms were open to receive them. Employment would be created for every mechanical art; invention would be sharpened, industry enforced, and œconomy would naturally follow. The idle and debauched, who now labour but four days in a week, and riot the other two, might probably complain; but of what? why, that by admitting people more industrious than themselves, they should be obliged to labour six days in the week, and live temperate and sober.” *Thoughts on Trade and Commerce*, p. 20.

BUT, at all events, we must put a stop to the rage of building more houses for the second and third classes of the people, than there are persons

persons of those classes to occupy them ; and, by an act of the legislature, oblige the landholders, and other builders, to erect a proper number of small tenements, for the conveniency of families of the lower classes of the people, who, in proportion to their numbers, even in the present declining state of our population, have hardly a single room for each family, much less an entire cot. In the capital, this is become a most dreadful hardship on the poorer sort of people. The occupiers of houses, of from twenty to thirty pounds per annum, let them scanty apartments, on higher terms than were formerly given for small houses.

EVERY builder of twenty houses to be let at from thirty to seventy pounds, or more, per annum, should have been obliged to erect four at least, on a contiguous spot, at from five to ten pounds per annum, for the conveniency of such poor mechanics and tradesmen as might fairly be supposed to be wanted, by the occupiers of the twenty large houses. On these principles all new towns, are established in well-regulated states ; and I see no reason why the same polity should not be enforced in the case of considerable additions to old cities. Time, and the gradual decrease of our useful hands, will make it absolutely necessary to take some of these steps, to secure subsistence and common conveniencies for industrious and labouring families.

WE will now consider population, as it affects the whole circulation of the inland trade of the kingdom ; by which means we shall see, in a still more conspicuous light, the necessity of watching over every event with a jealous eye, that has the least tendency to a diminution of the numbers of our labouring people.

AN abundance of hands being found for the various branches of husbandry, whose products are all clear profit, being raised from the earth and labour, the next thing is, to take care that we have a proportional number of other hands, to transport and distribute these products from place to place, for inland consumption.

THE farmer must not therefore bring up all his sons to the plough and cart, nor all his daughters to the dairy : we must have a due quantity of buyers and sellers ; of retail shop-keepers, in every town and village.

BUT if the people are numerous and industrious, and the soil fertile, in various kinds of products, there will still be a superfluity for the purposes of being improved by art.

OUR population must therefore afford us a proportional number of ARTISTS and MANUFACTURERS; and the same encouragement must be given to these orders of men as to husbandmen and shop-keepers.

THE products of the country, either in their native state or manufactured, which are destined for foreign consumption, must be transported thither in ships from an island, like Great Britain: a due proportion of another order of people is therefore requisite; a race of seamen.

To furnish these, every manufacturing town in the kingdom should have a college for the maintenance and education of boys for the sea-service. The number should hold some degree of proportion to the value or tonnage of their exports.

A MARITIME state cannot supply her mercantile inhabitants with seamen. If she means to keep up a respectable naval force, for the protection of her commerce, that commerce must provide seamen for its own operations. Thus there must be a duplicate number of mariners in such a state; or, whenever it is in danger from a foreign enemy, government will be obliged to substitute the greater for the lesser evil, and stagnate commerce for a time, by seizing on the seamen employed in the merchants service.

THE obvious necessity of training up a very considerable body of people to the sea-faring life, in a trading country, naturally leads to another commercial principle.

IN every nation, depending in any respect on foreign commerce, fisheries on its coasts should meet with the highest encouragement, and, next to agriculture, should obtain the sanction of government, were it for no other reason, but, because this branch of inland trade will furnish us with seamen, and afford a successive supply of these useful subjects.

BESIDES which, it is to be considered, that what is gained from the sea by fisheries is so much clear profit added to the produce of the soil, and brings along with it an increase of provisions; and in proportion to

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its abundance, it must cause a greater superfluity of the other necessities of life ; some of which, as grain in particular, are articles of commerce.

VARIOUS have been the attempts to reduce this principle to practice, with a degree of success equal to the importance of the object ; but they have all failed, through a variety of causes, the chief of which has been a pernicious monopoly, which has defeated every patriotic plan for putting the fishery on our coasts on a respectable footing.

LASTLY, the state will occasionally want a military force for its defence ; for this likewise provision must be made in the number of the inhabitants of a commercial country ; so that the supplies for this purpose may not prejudice agriculture, arts, and manufactures, the vitals of the kingdom.

HAVING now considered population in every point of view, as a commercial and political principle, I have only one remark to add.

IF we have any jealousies or fears about a general or a partial naturalization, the former of which, notwithstanding all that has been advanced in its favour, is a remedy not to be applied, but in cases of extreme necessity, we must stop the progress of depopulation while it is yet in our power.

THE principal means have been noticed, in as concise a manner as possible ; and it is humbly recommended to the wisdom of administration, and to the humanity, candour, and true patriotism of all orders of men amongst us, possessed of landed or commercial property, to examine them with attention, and if they are found to be just and reasonable, to adopt them without loss of time.

ON MANUFACTURES.

THE next principle to render commerce flourishing is, to establish and support MANUFACTURES.

THE real wants of mankind are confined within such narrow bounds, that, strictly speaking, corn, and (for want of that) roots, fruits, water, milk, flesh, fowl, and fish, with the skins of animals; and such instruments, to prepare these, for their several uses, as the most simple arts furnished in the state of nature; have always been considered as quite sufficient to satisfy all their natural necessities.

BUT as mankind increased, and formed themselves into regular societies, imaginary wants multiplied with them, and new desires gave birth to new arts; and to such in particular, as tended to gratify these imaginary wants; all included at first, under the denomination of the conveniencies of life; but which being in process of time varied and multiplied *ad infinitum*, became at length to be more generally stiled, the luxuries and elegancies of life.

THIS is a concise, but just account of the origin of MANUFACTURES, under which head are comprised every branch of the mechanic, and polite arts, however the latter may have been dignified and distinguished by the ambition of princes and great men, who have taken a foolish pride in patronizing them, in preference to the former; or by the vanity of their professors, who have most commonly gloried more in an empty title, an honourable distinction in courts, an idle rank and precedence in academies, and the prospect of a pompous, monumental inscription, than in acquiring the general esteem of their fellow-citizens, by shaking off this false pride, and reducing their rank and manner

manner of life more on a level with the mass of reputable tradesmen; by which means they might afford their desirable productions at a moderate rate, and not make their professions detrimental, instead of beneficial, to a commercial state; which they certainly do, when they impose a most exorbitant price on the imaginary wants of mankind, that they may be enabled to live like nabobs, and to associate with the princes and nobles of the land.

A MANUFACTURER I understand to be, any person who, by the labour of his hands, with or without the aid of implements and machines, gives a new form to, or meliorates, or improves, the natural products of the earth; and, if this definition be just, then, in the division of the several classes of citizens, which every wise government ought to observe, the members even of a royal academy of polite artists should not hold any superior rank in life to the mechanic artists and manufacturers; who, in a commercial kingdom, as they are the most useful, should be considered, if any difference is made, as the most honourable members of such a community. Annual premiums may be thought the only proper encouragement suited to the genius and station of the professors of the most useful arts, which, because they are common, are called vulgar: but experience proves the contrary---a title, or some other honorary distinction, visible to the eyes of the world, has been known to produce wonders amongst rival manufacturers. The Chinese furnish an example---who confer the honour of a mandarine, or noble of the ninth class, on manufacturers and mechanic artists.

SHOULD our most gracious sovereign have the same glorious design in view, in constituting the order of MERIT, so much talked of, it will immortalise its royal founder.

THE fabricator of the best woollen or linen cloth, with respect to the goodness of its quality, in proportion to its price, will then find himself distinguished by his sovereign; and if he is in affluent circumstances, such an honour will have happier effects than pecuniary rewards. In a word, the supreme governor of a commercial people, who should pass through the whole circle of the useful arts, and annually distribute some coveted token of royal favour, in every part of his dominions with the same discretion, would be almost adored by his best subjects.

Popularity would seat him in the triumphal car; he would be justly stiled, "The well-beloved"---and faction would expire at his feet.

WE have said, that MANUFACTURES, or the arts which depend on industrious skill and labour, give a new form to, or meliorate and improve the natural products of the earth; they are the objects then of all MANUFACTURES; and the elements, with the aid of men and other animals, are the means of carrying them on. I might have added, machines; but as these are constructed by men, they are properly included in the aid furnished by them.

IT will now be proper to demonstrate the effects of MANUFACTURES, with respect to the body-politic; after which I shall point out the principles on which they must be established and conducted in every state, to secure the enjoyment of these effects, and to render them permanent.

IN the first place, a manufacturing nation will procure from its domains, a greater quantity of natural products than one that has no manufactures.

SECONDLY, The cultivation of these products will require a greater number of inhabitants.

THIRDLY, the art of giving new forms, or improving them, will furnish an increase of employment, and of the means of convenient subsistence, to a much larger body of the people.

FOURTHLY, The productions of this art becoming universally known and esteemed, foreign nations, not possessed of the same advantages, and considering them as the means of increasing the enjoyments of life, will be stimulated by ideal wants, to require them as real necessities.

FIFTHLY, As the manufacturing art has given an additional value to the products of nature, and foreign nations cannot gratify their desire of obtaining them but by an exchange of commodities with the manufacturing people, or, in lieu thereof, by giving the full value of the manufactures in money; it follows, that the manufacturing people will receive more in natural products, or specie, than they gave; by which a balance of commerce must accrue to them, and their relative riches be thereby increased.

SIXTHLY, Natural products, or the precious metals, which are made the common medium of commercial exchanges, and the means

of procuring the necessaries and comforts of life, being more abundant in a manufacturing country, emigrations of useful people will take place from other countries, and, provided no impolitic law prohibits it, a new accession of industrious inhabitants will be acquired, who will come in search of the ease and plenty which industry, properly encouraged and directed, is sure to procure.

SEVENTHLY, The number of citizens multiplying incessantly in a manufacturing kingdom, will render it stronger, and better able to defend itself against foreign enemies, than a nation where no manufactures subsist.

It is an old political maxim, that the riches and strength of a nation consist in the number of inhabitants; but this, like many other short proverbial rules, requires a free illustration. The quality and condition of the mass of inhabitants, and the manner in which they are employed must be determined, before the maxim is admitted without exception; for surely no man will pretend that a country will be either the richer or the stronger, that swarms with drunken, idle, debauched, debilitated, or sickly inhabitants.

“ A COUNTRY of soldiers,” says a writer of late date*, “ with all their ideas of high importance, could only exist, like a banditti, on the plunder of their neighbours. Rome had no sooner conquered the world than she began to lose it again; and the empire of Macedon became broken as soon as the establisher of it died. What a nation of mere soldiers are, we at present see by the Turks; and the like will become experienced by the nations of Barbary. But the industrious and populous empires of China and Japan have been alike prosperous and durable.

“ WITH his vast extent of territory, the grand sultan, whose supplies of every kind are exacted from oppressed, harrassed, starving, and depopulated provinces, may be pronounced a feeble potentate, though his country is naturally fruitful. But the Venetians and Dutch, with small portions of land, have each, in their turns, been

* Considerations on the Policy, Commerce, and Circumstances of the Kingdom. London, printed for J. Almon, 1770.

“ very powerful states, from the proportional great numbers, industry,
 “ and opulence of their people.

“ THUS, from false policy, the immense and fertile empire of
 “ Turkey has been turning into a desert, while, from true policy, the
 “ naturally insignificant and scanty swamps of Venice and Holland were
 “ improving into crowded hives of useful and wealthy people. It is
 “ true the condition of these commonwealths has become altered,
 “ though not in an equal degree, from the tendency there is in all
 “ kinds of governments to corruption and abuse. Venice has been
 “ greatly weakened by the abuse of aristocratic power, which is too
 “ apt to prove mischievous; and the form of government has, in
 “ effect, been changed from democratic to aristocratic in Holland,
 “ from the influence of wealth among a part of the people, which has
 “ enabled them, in too great a degree, to make a property of their
 “ country. Yet, even in their present condition, no doubt can be
 “ entertained, that, conjunctively, these two little countries would
 “ prove much an over-match for the vast Ottoman empire, by means
 “ of their naval force, and commercial resources for the hire of mer-
 “ cenary armies, were the other powers of Europe to be neutral on
 “ the occasion.”

THE same reasoning will hold good with respect to a country where too great a proportion of the inhabitants are persons of independent fortune; such as nobility and gentry, who are mere consumers, but neither contribute to the cultivation of the natural products of the earth, nor to the improvement of them by the manual exercise of any art. A country overstocked with such classes of inhabitants must grow poor and feeble, instead of rich and powerful.

“ LAND and labour together are the sources of all wealth : without
 “ a competency of land, there would be no subsistence, and but a
 “ very poor and uncomfortable one without labour; so that wealth,
 “ or riches, consist either in a property in land, or in the products of
 “ land and labour.”

BUT in countries where manufactures and commerce flourish, the value of labour will always be much greater than that of the land.

THUS

“ THUS the annual produce of labour in England is of much greater value than the rents of the land ; but their exact proportion to each other cannot easily be assigned. It is commonly supposed that a farmer, to live comfortably, must make three rents of his land ; and when we consider the coarseness of those commodities that are commonly expended in a farmer’s house, in comparison of many others consumed by those of more affluent fortunes, the value of labour to that of land must be with us more than two to one.”

“ WOOL wrought into cloth is much advanced in its value. Thread may be of one hundred times the value of the flax whereof it is made. The value of the materials in watches, and innumerable other things made of metals, is but small in comparison of the value of the workmanship.”

“ THE balance-spring in a good watch is worth more than a million times the value of the steel of which it is made *.”

THESE illustrations are sufficient to confirm the beneficial effects of arts and manufactures.

WE must now unfold the principles on which manufactories must be established, in order to attain all those desirable ends, and to secure them in a permanent state.

AND here a number of different objects, all of equal importance, demand our close attention:

THE first care of a wise administration, when any ingenious person or persons propose the establishment of a new manufacture, must be, to examine strictly into the nature of the art or work itself, and to determine if it will be of general utility, and likely to be the object of universal desire ;—for unless it will answer the purposes of commerce, by producing a superfluity beyond the demand for home-consumption, it will be found too inconsiderable and trifling, in a maritime commercial state, to be intitled to the sanction and protection of government ; and it might even prove prejudicial to the true interests of such a nation,

* Essay upon Money and Coins; Part i. *article*, the Theory of Commerce. London, printed for G. Hawkins, 1757.

to grant the requisite encouragements to such an establishment; as will appear when we treat of the duties on importation, and the prohibitions necessarily laid on similar foreign manufactures, to favour the progress of a rival art at home.

IF, on a strict scrutiny, the manufacture proposed to be established is not liable to the foregoing exception, the next point will be to ascertain the facility of procuring the first materials, (especially if they are not the natural produce of the country): the price to be given for them, the cost of tools, implements, food, labour in manufacturing the commodity, and incidental contingencies, with the value of the time employed in the fabrication, must be all nicely calculated. The value set on the manufacture must necessarily be equal to all these charges. What it sells for above this price is the manufacturer's profit; and there must still be room left for another gain to be made by the tradesman who vends it for home-consumption, or the merchant who exports it. If it will bear these advances, it is worth national encouragement.

BUT if, after all, a cheaper or better commodity for the same price can be imported from a foreign country, with which we have commercial intercourse, even though a high duty is paid on importation, it is the height of folly to countenance such a manufacture; for it will be detrimental to the state.

I HAVE one manufacture in my view which seems to approach nearly to that point: I mean that of thread-lace.

As this matter has stood for many years, a duty of fifteen pence per yard is payable on all thread-lace imported from abroad, without distinction: the most absurd duty that ever was laid. In a pair of Brussels point lace ruffles for gentlemen, there are three yards; the value may be thirty, forty, or fifty guineas, yet they pay no more than four shillings duty on importation. For these, and other rich sorts, the product of the Austrian Netherlands, there is a great demand in England; therefore this idle duty is cheerfully paid. To add to this ridiculous transaction, they are now so well imitated in England, that a celebrated dealer in London, knowing our foolish fondness for any thing foreign,

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has sent them into that country, ordered them home again, paid this trifling duty, and sold them as Brussels lace to great advantage. If these then were absolutely prohibited, our manufacturers in this branch would be properly supported.

ON the contrary, the price of materials, of labour and of provisions, render it impossible for our manufacturers to equal the low-priced laces made in Flanders, the consumption of which is very great for womens uses. On an edging, which is fabricated for eight pence per yard in Flanders, the same duty is imposed by the British legislature, as on a lace of ten guineas value per yard. The consequence is, the smuggling into this kingdom immense quantities of low-priced Flanders lace, which lies in a small compass; and, for half a guinea you may have a box brought over, worth two hundred pounds.

I HAD the honour to lay this affair before the late right honourable George Grenville, when at the head of the treasury; but, to my great concern, he assured me, it could not be remedied, the revenue arising from this duty being long since appropriated.

THE mischievous consequences of these appropriations shall be shewn in the treatise on the elements of finances.

THE effect of laying on this duty was, that the Flemish government justly considered it as a violation of the barrier treaty of 1715, by which a tariff, for the regulation of duties between Holland, Flanders, and England, was settled, and agreed not to be altered but by the consent of the three contracting parties. As we began, they concluded, by breaking almost every article of the treaty, both with respect to commercial and political objects.

THEY raised their duties on the following articles to such a degree, as almost amounted to a prohibition, and has in a great measure deprived us of a most advantageous commerce with that country: on tobacco, sugar, salt, woollen cloths, particularly white plains, for the regimentals of their troops; worsted stuffs, crockery ware, paper-hangings, &c. and thus we lost great part of a most valuable branch of trade, the returns for which were chiefly made in specie, for the sake of selling low-priced thread-laces of our own manufacture to our ladies,

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on worse terms than they might have been imported, and an advantageous exchange have been made for them, of our staple manufactures.

THE trade to Flanders ought to be more encouraged, and some attempts made to revive it. Instead of five vessels passing and repassing between London and Ostend in a year, by rotation, we might have fifty, if we were not too tenacious in some commercial points, and too indolent and inattentive in others.

THE goodness of the quality of manufactures, when compared with the same specie and price, the product of foreign competitors, and the prospect of a demand for it, should be the guides to government in giving sanction to such establishments.

WHEN the scrutiny I have recommended proves satisfactory, then, as a commercial nation should manufacture every natural produce of the country, that cannot be consumed in its native state at home, (for, if exported unmanufactured, the additional value from labour is lost, and the industrious poor wanting employment, population will naturally decrease,) it will be proper, in the next place, to determine the situation of MANUFACTORIES.

THIS should always be as near to navigable rivers, and to high roads, as possible, for the facility of conveying to them the first materials, and secondary aids, and of transporting the fabricated commodities to the great inland towns for home-consumption, or to the seaports for exportation.

WHERE nature has denied these advantages, art must be employed to supply the defect, especially when fuel and provisions are not to be found in plenty on the spot, most proper in other respects for establishing a manufactory. In this, and all other cases, the ancient commercial principle must be applied. Navigable canals must be made, and easy communications from county to county, and to the coasts of the kingdom, must be opened, or the establishment will never be considerable.

THIS principle lay dormant for many ages in this country, without the least attempt being made to introduce so beneficial an aid to the manufacturing interest of this country; nor must we be surprized at this, considering

considering the very few commercial authors of repute in England, and that even these are silent upon this important subject. Yet one would have imagined, that the prodigious advantage of navigable canals in Holland and Flanders, but especially in the latter, would have tempted some curious British traveller, or some able minister, residing at the courts of Brussels and the Hague, to have recommended to their native country the pursuit of the same plan.

THE navigable canal from Ostend, at half a league from the harbour, with which it communicates by two remarkable locks, through an extent of country no less than thirty-six miles in length, and branching out into a number of smaller communications on the way, with different towns; is a most stupendous work of art, and will probably remain the only monument of the sound policy of the Flemish government for ages to come. By this, and other canals, they rendered the transport of coals and wood easy, and almost put a stop to the importation of English coals at the port of Ostend, the charleroy coals being delivered from the inland country, even to the towns and villages bordering on their coasts; and, by the same means, their internal trade is continued in a flourishing condition, though they have lost almost all their foreign commerce, the Flemish navigation being reduced to so low an ebb, that their merchant-ships are obliged to sail under Dutch colours, and to procure Mediterranean passports from the admiralty of Holland, to protect them from the Turks.

IF, in this declining state of commerce, inland trade and manufactures can still derive a considerable profit from navigable canals, what may not be expected from them in all parts of England, where they are practicable, at a time when the extensive settlements of Great Britain in America, occasion such amazing demands for our most valuable manufactures; the abundance, quality, and low price of which, must depend so much on every facility of transport that can be given, to the materials of which they are composed, to the necessaries of life requisite for the fabricators, and to the manufacture itself, for exportation, when completed.

THE difference of the charge of transporting merchandise in waggons, or by water, may be easily ascertained by taking the prices of each on a

bale of woollen goods, from Colchester to London, to which there is a double communication, by land and water; and it will always be still greater in proportion between the water-carriage, by means of canals crossing countries, and opening communications with sea-ports, to which there was no access by land, but by cross roads and long journies.

THE noble, spirited enterprize, therefore, of his Grace the Duke of Bridgwater, ought to endear him to his country. Statues and public honours must receive an additional value when bestowed on such general benefactors to mankind; but even these will ever fall short of the grateful acclamations of an industrious people, whose arts, manufactures and trade, are improved by such undertakings. The free, unbought, universal applause of his fellow-citizens must give such a true patriot more real satisfaction than all the pageant distinctions of a court. In a very short time this great man will have the pleasure of seeing his navigation through Lancashire and Cheshire completed, and a very beneficial communication opened with the flourishing port of Liverpool; after which, he will cut a water carriage between the manufacturing towns of Manchester and Stockport. I mention these great works because they are so capital, and that the Duke was the reviver of this principle of commerce; but I do not mean to withhold from their just share of public praise those worthy noblemen and gentlemen who have made, and still continue to make, the same improvements in other counties. Let me add, that these undertakings are admirably well timed; for the decrease of hands, the dearness of provisions, the high price of draught horses, and of forage to keep them, are circumstances which enhance the benefits to be derived from navigable canals, and, render them more peculiarly advantageous at this time, to our manufacturing counties.

ANOTHER point respecting the situation of new manufactories, is to chuse places as remote as possible from overgrown, luxurious, inland capitals, where pleasures and extravagance have gained the ascendant; for if a manufactory be set on foot in their neighbourhood, the workmen will be debauched, and become indolent, exorbitant, imbecile, and

and unprofitable. Regard should likewise be had to the state of population in the country round about, that the new establishment may not suffer from the scarcity of hands, or an impossibility to procure them on reasonable terms: where there are a great number of poor unemployed, or not fully occupied, of a sober disposition, and healthy, there, a manufactory is most likely to succeed.

THE clashing of interests should likewise particularly be avoided, as well as the partialities of enthusiasm, and other prejudices. To set up a manufactory in opposition to another already established on the same spot, of which no well-founded complaints are made, and where two such enterprizes cannot possibly succeed, is ungenerous and dishonourable in the new undertakers, and as hazardous on the part of the managers, as it is impolitic on the part of government to countenance such rivalry, which may be the destruction of both, and annihilate the art or manufacture entirely. It would be equally improper for a member of the church of England to fix his new undertaking in the center of a large body of dissenters, such as the quakers of Philadelphia, or the presbyterians of New England; and as absurd in one of their people to establish a new undertaking in Maryland, or any Romish settlement, in preference to places inhabited by people of his own opinion; for though a general regard to the prosperity of commerce, and the encouragement of ingenuity, might prevail over the narrow notions of bigotry, yet the manufacturer would find many obstacles, arising from the different sentiments of all the servants employed under him, and might be assured of the first opportunity being taken to seduce them, and establish one of their own profession in the same branch. The histories of every country in the habitable world, and the memoirs even of particular counties and provinces in the same kingdom, support the truth of this observation by melancholy evidences.

ONE would imagine it needless to mention the precaution of advertising to the salubrity of the air, when we speculate the situation of extensive undertakings, in which a great number of people are to be employed; but the instances we have on record of valuable establishments failing, to the utter ruin of the undertakers, and the loss of many lives,

owing solely to the making choice of unhealthy spots, sometimes through ignorance, and at others through parsimony, obliges me to close this head with recommending this consideration to all proprietors of new commercial establishments.

OUR next object is, the first materials of arts and manufactures.

THERE is an œconomy in the domestic police of France, with respect to her manufactures, in which she gains a superiority over us. Her principal manufactures are fabrications from her own products, and she chiefly consumes her own manufactures; whereas, in England, the rage of fashion inclines us to the consumption of foreign manufactures, and some of our own valuable ones are wrought from foreign materials.

THIS last circumstance is a great disadvantage to any manufacture; for supposing your government to be at war with the country from whence you draw the first materials for your manufacture, or that, for commercial reasons, they forbid the export of them; the manufacture, in these cases, will be either so enhanced in price, from scarcity, that it will neither sell at home, nor at foreign markets; or it will be totally demolished. This happened to the woollen manufactures in the low countries, when the English parliament first put a stop to the exportation of wool.

It is then a fixed principle of commerce, with respect to manufactures, that, to render their establishment complete, profitable, and permanent, the first materials should be found at home. And,

ON this principle, we cannot give too great rewards for the cultivation of silk, flax, and madder, in any part of the British dominions.

It is strangely impolitic to suffer so important a branch of our commerce, as the linen manufactory, to be dependent on foreign nations for its first materials. I tremble at the bare idea of a prohibition laid in foreign states, on the exportation of flax and flax-seed. Were this to happen, how we should curse our folly for having employed so much of our land for the feeding of race-horses, hunters, post-chaise horses, and others, for exportation, which might, in that case, reduce us to the want of shirts.

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SOMETHING has been done towards cultivating flax, and madder, for the use of the dyers, through the assistance given by the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, both at home, and in our colonies ; but this important point is not so generally attended to as it merits.

ANOTHER principle invariably to be attended to in a manufacturing country is, not to impose any importation-duty on the first materials for arts and manufactures ; for, having already observed the disadvantages of being obliged to get them from abroad, we must not add another weight to increase the difficulty.

It may even sometimes be politic to give a bounty on the importation of the first materials of manufactures ; as in the article of INDIGO, for the use of the dyers, on which the British parliament granted a bounty in 1749, but limited it to the produce of our colonies.

THE first materials for arts and manufactures should likewise be free from all customs, inland taxes, and excises.

THE establishment of some very capital manufactures on the continent has been owing entirely to these exemptions from customs and excises ; such immunities being the first advantages solicited for by the proprietors of new undertakings, and constantly granted for a term of years by France, Germany, Prussia, and Dantzick.

BURTHENSOME taxes and excises are the greatest discouragements imaginable to arts and manufactures ; they ruin small establishments, commenced with slender stocks, drawing too heavy deductions in ready money from the manufacturer's little fund, to provide for such payments, besides maintaining a number of officers to collect them, who live on the labours of the industrious, who deserve all the encouragement that can be given them, and ought to enjoy a kind of ease and satisfaction suited to their stations ; which cannot be the case while rack-rents, excises on the materials of their work, taxes on provisions, and parish-rates, so entirely absorb their profits, that they have no prospect of getting before-hand in the world, or even of leaving their children in the same situation of life, after many years passed in toilsome occupations. " Exorbitant taxes," says Mr. Hume, " like extreme necessity, de-

“stroy industry, by engendering despair;” and I am sorry to say, that whoever will take the pains to look over the list of our taxes and excises, will find, that by much too great a proportion, both in number and amount, fall upon the most valuable part of the subjects, the labouring people, who are the least able to bear them. The excises on soap, candles, beer, and several other articles, too many indeed to enumerate in this place, as we must resume this subject in another place, are of this number.

BUT besides the exemptions from these burdens, for a certain number of years, our great rivals, the French, give encouragements to new manufactories, which it would be deemed madness to propose to our treasury-board; however, they have produced such great effects, that I must mention the principal, for which I am indebted to the unknown author of *Thoughts on Trade and Commerce* *.

“IT has been observed, and I believe with great truth, that whenever France has attempted to establish any new manufacture, it has spared no cost to encourage manufacturing hands to come and live there. A remarkable instance of this we find in Languedoc about the year 1675. The sieur de Varenne having brought workmen from Holland, undertook to make cloth for the Levant trade, and established a very considerable manufactory; that of Clermont and Lodeve followed soon after. The states of Languedoc lent them 130,000 livres for many years, without interest, and gave them bounties, by way of bounty, a pistole for every piece of fine cloth made there.

“IT is remarkable, that the meanest trade in France is under some wise regulation, and that the artists and manufacturers are laid under a necessity of excelling in their respective employments, and none are admitted to the freedom of their trading companies, without actually making a piece of goods, and being examined upon oath.

“BUT, farther to shew the great encouragement given by the French to the woollen manufactories, I shall here mention what

* London, printed for S. Hooper, 1770.

“ Lewis XIV. did at Abbeville. He lent one Robais, a Dutchman,
“ 40,000 livres, without interest, in order that he might establish
“ a manufactory for superfine broad-cloths. The king also erected
“ him a spacious and commodious place to carry it on, and a fine house
“ to live in, and granted him a patent for twenty years; and Robais
“ being a protestant, Lewis also granted him another patent, renewable
“ every twenty years, for the free exercise of his religion, for himself,
“ family, and all the people employed under him in this manufactory.
“ The king himself wore some of the first cloth that was made, and
“ ordered all his court to do the same; and we are informed, that all
“ these privileges are maintained, to this day, inviolably, and that the
“ manufactory is at this time carried on by three nephews to the old
“ Robais, who first established it.

“ THERE are an hundred and eight broad looms employed in this
“ place, and about six hundred persons, men, women, and children.”

THIS extract, and what has passed under my own observation with respect to the conduct of the court of Vienna, leads me to consider the necessity of preventing the seduction of manufacturers, as another point of the utmost consequence to a trading nation.

THE seduction of artists and manufacturers to leave their native country, and practice their art and skill in foreign nations, should be punished by death with respect to the seducers, and outlawry, with confiscation of effects remaining in the country they desert, with respect to the fugitives themselves.

THE clandestine exportation (for a legal one cannot be supposed) of the first materials for manufactures, or of the tools, implements, or machines of arts, should be subject to the same penal laws, without the least mitigation.

THE want of observing these principles has been the occasion of our losing many of our manufactures, and, with them, a considerable part of our foreign trade.

I WILL only instance a few accidents of this sort, of late date.

THE art of making plate-glass was stolen from us, and established at Copenhagen, through the villainy of a Middlesex justice of the peace, who fled his country upon the occasion.

A FUGITIVE for debt from Manchester has carried the cotton-velvet manufacture to the south of France.

THE woollen manufacture is rising again from its ruins in Austrian Flanders ; infomuch that they make broad-cloths, worth one guinea per yard, owing to the smuggling cutters carrying wool to the Flemish coasts, to barter for tea and geneva.

THE paper-hanging branch has lately been introduced there, with all the necessary tools and implements, directly from the river Thames.

ONE Murray, a native of this country, and formerly manager of the copperas works at Deptford, has likewise established at Villvorde, near Bruffels, a manufactory for making oil of vitriol and aqua-fortis. The profit is so considerable, and the undertaking so great, that the Flemish government is principally concerned with him ; and we have lost the trade to Holland, France, and Flanders, for these great articles used by the dyers, and other artists.

THE Bow and Chelsea china, and Staffordshire-ware manufactories, have had numbers of hands seduced, now settled at Tournay in Flanders.

THE hard-ware branches have been pilfered from time to time, and workmen, with their tools, conveyed as far as Vienna.

IT would tire you to mention all the seductions of this sort, and the voluntary emigrations of our deluded countrymen, that fell within my knowledge, while I had the honour to serve the King. I did my duty ; I represented them home, and my conduct was approved ; I had the thanks of the Treasury, and of the secretaries of state, predecessors to Lord Weymouth, from 1763 to 1768. The copies of these documents I have still by me, particularly a letter from the right honourable General Conway, on my sending home reclaimed manufacturers from Tournay.

SUCH encouragement should always be given to artists and manufacturers in a trading country, as they cannot possibly receive from home. In that case, you may lose a few individuals, either through misfortunes, such as flight for debt, &c. or a present, partial advantage ; but families, and bodies of useful artists and manufacturers, will not quit their native country, if properly protected and rewarded for their honest industry.

ONE article of this encouragement should ever be, to proportion their wages to the advantages derived from their labour.

THIS rule is inhumanly transgressed in many branches of arts, manufactures, and trade, in England, to the great disgrace of the masters.

IN some, the wages given to workmen, and to servants, are not equal to what is settled for them by law, in several well-regulated states on the continent, where all the necessaries of life are cheaper than in England; nor are they subject to such oppressions and subjection in the most despotic countries, as in this land of liberty: while, on the other hand, there are branches of the useful arts and trades, in which the servants are suffered to combine against the masters with impunity, and often gain a complete victory over them, by prescribing and imposing their own conditions for their labour.

BOTH these extremes should be carefully avoided. It is the greatest reproach imaginable to our internal police, that instances of these false principles in the conduct of our manufacturing and trading interests can be produced; and it is the more extraordinary, as we do not want laws, or prudent regulations, to prevent these evils; but the misfortune is, that they are become obsolete, partly through the indolence and venality of the magistracy, and partly through the jealous, monopolizing, selfish, and, I may say, dishonest spirit of some great manufacturers and tradesmen.

THE very low wages of labourers in agriculture, and of some workmen in the hard-ware branches, compared with the prodigious profits on husbandry and those manufactures, have been frequently complained of. We have been lately alarmed with the insurrections of miners, coal-heavers, weavers, and other labourers, and we have also seen combinations of journeymen in the metropolis, fixing their own prices, and stagnating particular branches of trade till their demands were complied with. Whenever these events happen, clear, ample, and decisive laws should be enacted by the legislature of a powerful, trading nation, to prevent the possibility of a repetition of the same disorderly proceedings, by protecting one party against the oppressive weight of cruelty and avarice; and by guarding the other, against unwarrantable, mercenary extortions.

THE punishment, for instance, cannot well be too severe for a master in any art or trade, who, to undermine his competitor, will fraudulently give bounties, premiums, or rewards to workmen, over and above the stated prices of their labour, in order to seduce them from another, and engross their skill and industry.

A WORKMAN who cabals, and privately conspires with others, to exact other terms than those established by law or custom, should suffer equally a very rigorous chastisement. But effectual regulations of this kind will never take place, till all partiality and ignorance is removed from the seats of legislation and justice; in fine, till the most reputable, disinterested merchants are called upon to arbitrate these matters, and settle them yearly to the satisfaction of all parties, as was the case in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and her successor James I.

As it should be an absolute principle to keep every work of art up to its standard, with respect to its reputed quality, though the price may vary, the punishment of DEATH should be inflicted on all persons affixing marks or stamps, which denote superior excellence, on commodities of inferior quality; and goods exported, or delivered for home-consumption, by any reputed measure or weight in the gross, proving deficient, should be returned for account of the maker, after burning a sample in the public market-place of the town it came from, and proclaiming the maker to be a common cheat, and an enemy to the trade of his country.

I WOULD not be so severe, if I did not know that short measure, defective breadths, inferior qualities given for superior, and counterfeit names, marks, and stamps, have done more mischief to some branches of our foreign trade, than even our pernicious taxes on its inland operations, which have raised their price above their intrinsic worth, compared with the produce of other countries.

HERE again we are sorry to observe, that our rivals, the French, exceed us in their internal œconomy, with respect to the useful arts and manufactures.

THEY consider the credit of the nation as deeply interested in the integrity of its fabricators and artists; and therefore they punish very rigorously

rigorously all frauds and impositions in their staple manufactures, and the prosecutions for counterfeit marks and stamps are criminal ; these matters being subject to the jurisdiction of the police ; so that it is very rare to find an instance of such frauds in France, because the state makes it an object of public concern ; whereas in England it is only a suit in equity. Thus, if the king of Great Britain grants a patent to a subject for a particular invention, and another counterfeits it, and even makes use of his name, stamp, and coat of arms, the injured party is redressed at common law, by a verdict awarding pecuniary damages ; but the government never considers the injury sustained by the public, in the sale of a counterfeit work of art or ingenuity, of inferior quality.

YET, in another case of property, it is a capital offence to forge a name or mark, though the injury done to an individual, or to the state, in counterfeiting a note of hand for money, is not equal to that of putting false stamps and marks on manufactures deficient in quantity, and inferior in quality, to those they are intended to represent.

THE care taken in the manufacturing of stuffs of every kind has been the means of increasing that branch of foreign commerce in France ; and it is remarkable, that they rather exceed the given breadths and lengths, than fall short of them, which is the complaint against ours. The coarser sort of stuffs made at Norwich, Coventry, and Spitalfields, generally fall short of both ; many of our Manchester goods are shamefully deficient ; and, of late years, the Irish are falling into a deficiency with respect to the lengths of their linens. The Dutch and Flanders hollands exceed the measure marked on the piece, above two ells, which allows the retailer for loss of measure, in cutting it out in small quantities ; whereas our Irish linens have only half a yard over the stamped measure, and sometimes not so much. These being chiefly consumed at home, the defect is not so material an object ; but our trade to Flanders, where they are accustomed to liberal weights and measures, has been almost lost in the woollen stuff branch, owing in a great degree to this perfidy in our manufacturers ; the French pursuing their interests better, by keeping up to a generous surplus in their

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lengths, have introduced their stuffs generally into that country, which consumes a prodigious quantity.

It may be objected to me, that the high duties laid on all woollen stuffs by the court of BRUSSELS, since the year 1715, contrary to the faith of treaties, have been the cause of our losing the greatest part of this valuable branch of commerce with that country; to which I should reply, that the French labour under the same disadvantage, yet their commerce with the AUSTRIAN NETHERLANDS in stuffs, is greatly increased, and ours proportionally diminished.

To say the truth, the whole manufacturing interest being subject to the jurisdiction of the police in France, is a very great advantage in their favour; for all the frauds and deceits in the several works of art, all the oppressions and injustice of masters, and every misbehaviour of workmen, is properly inspected into by a kind of jury of merchants, consisting of twelve of the most reputable people in trade, who have a power of proceeding in a summary way, without expence or procrastination, and who constantly report to the royal council, the state of trade and manufactures in every province, accurately noting the encouragements wanting, the abuses to be rectified, and the causes of the decay of any branch of trade, or art, where it is perceptible.

I AM very sensible, that there are many things practicable in more arbitrary governments, which cannot be introduced into Great Britain, without alarming our jealousy for our civil rights, as a free people; but, if it shall appear, that many of the regulations enforced by the government in France, with respect to their manufactures, are not so despotic, as those ineffectual means made use of in England, there can be no objection brought against adopting them, on the subject of liberty.

LET me only ask the question, Which seems most compatible with the idea of civil liberty, to have all differences between masters and work-men, all complaints about monopolizing, undermining, and unfair schemes of rivalry, and all cases of fraud and deceit, in the marks, stamps, measures, quantities, and qualities of commodities, decided by a court, or jury of twelve impartial merchants, or respectable tradesmen

men of the first class, who thoroughly understand the matters brought before them, and may be enabled to adjust nine disputes out of ten by arbitration; or to leave them to the discussion of two ignorant country justices of the peace, or two venal magistrates of the same denomination in the liberties of Westminster and county of Middlesex; gentlemen who know little or nothing about commercial concerns, and who, instead of clearing up the point, only involve it in obscurity; or are guilty of such manifest partiality and injustice, that their decisions are frequently the ground-work of tedious and expensive suits at law in Westminster-hall?

I SHOULD imagine every friend of freedom must give his vote in favour of the establishment of courts of merchants in every county in England, in preference to the present mode of referring any disputes between manufacturers and their workmen, to ignorant or corrupt justices of the peace*.

ANOTHER disadvantage our manufactures labour under is, that many of our common people are so averse to compulsion, that, though you make laws to oblige them to work such a number of hours, at certain wages, you cannot force them to do that work according to the best of their skill, or to exert themselves to the utmost, where its completion depends on assiduous labour.

BUT even for this there is an easy remedy, if manufacturers and traders would be just and honourable to each other; and here it is with great reluctance that I am obliged once more to bestow the greatest commendations on the French, and to reprimand my countrymen. For it is an undoubted fact, that in France no master will employ a workman, in any branch of their manufactures, without being well assured that he is totally discharged, and being thoroughly satisfied from his last master, that he has not embezzled any materials, spoiled any work he undertook, by idleness, inattention, drunkenness, or perverseness; nor has demanded more than the wages established by

* By statute, 1 Ann, the wages, demands, frauds, and deceits of workmen in woollen, &c. are to be determined by any two justices of the peace where the controversy doth arise.

law or custom in that branch. Indeed they are well apprized, that the seduction of the servants of other masters would be punished by the court of merchants, and the old master be permitted to reclaim his servant, even though he were not an indentured apprentice.

BUT in England there is no punishment for tempting workmen to leave one master, and hire themselves clandestinely to another, though the art and trade of the person they quit should be stagnated, or half ruined by such desertion. In the crape manufactory at Norwich, I am informed there have been some very scandalous practices of this sort; and as for masters giving more than the customary wages, the law in this case is by no means suited to the enormity of the offence; for nothing tends so much to the encouragement of idleness, debauchery, and insolence amongst low workmen, as this measure; yet the offender is only to suffer ten days imprisonment.

THE price of provisions, and indeed of all the necessaries of life, has been increasing ever since the year 1763; and this having given occasion to great murmurs amongst the labouring part of the people, and also to the public disturbances already mentioned, it follows, in the order of my subject, that I should enter into the discussion of a point, which has been constantly debated in the public papers, and in various treatises from the press; a point in which scarce two people agree in accidental conversation; and which has not yet been settled to the satisfaction of the parties interested.

IT is said by one party, that the prosperity of a manufacturing country depends on the cheapness of provisions, and the low rates of labour of every kind.

THE opposition alledge, that there cannot be a surer sign of the flourishing condition of arts, manufactures, and trade, than the dearness of provisions, and the high price of labour.

IT has been attempted likewise to establish a third opinion, arising out of the consideration of these two; and pamphlets have been published to prove, that, in England, the rates of labour have no dependence on the high price of provisions, and that the masters in the several branches of manufactures, and the useful arts, have no right to complain, "that the high price of provisions has enhanced the value of

“ their productions,” since the price of labour is not augmented in any proportionate degree; and therefore this is only a pretence to increase the profits of their several arts or manufactures, and to impose on the consumer.

IN a contest of such delicacy and importance, we cannot be too cautious or exact in advancing any thing that is not founded on the best information, and the soundest reasonings; for the least mistake, if we have any influence with government, or any credit with the body of the people, may be highly prejudicial to the commercial interests of our country, by engaging the one in false measures, or by instilling into the other wrong ideas.

THE authority of writers, whose works have gained great credit with the public, should claim the precedence in a scrutiny of this kind. I shall therefore take the liberty to introduce in this place, the force of Mr. Arthur Young’s * arguments, to prove, that the price of provisions by no means governs that of labour, and that the dearth of the former is no impediment to the success of manufactures. Sentiments so paradoxical, and, in some respects, so contrary to the received opinions of men of the first reputation in the commercial world before his time, that it would be an equal injustice to him and to our readers, if we were not to give them in his own words, that there may be no room for a charge of misrepresentation, before we produce the refutations of his opponents.

IN his treatise on the expediency of allowing a free exportation of corn, we find the following intelligence and calculation, and the inferences deduced, as they respect manufactures.

“ In the year 1767, I took a journey into Wales, the minutes of
“ which I laid before the public, under the title of A Six Weeks
“ Tour.

“ I FOUND in that journey that there was not any proportion be-
“ tween the rates of labour and those of provisions.

* Author of a treatise, intitled, The Expediency of allowing a free Exportation of Corn, the Farmer’s Letters, &c. London, printed for W. Nicoll, 1767.

ELEMENTS OF COMMERCE.

“ THE year following, I made a similar tour through the north of
 “ England, and found, throughout above two thousand five hundred
 “ miles of country, that the rates of labour, in no respect, depended
 “ on those of provisions.

“ BREAD, butter, cheese, and meat being thrown into one aggregate price, and the earnings of a family the same; the following
 “ was the comparison which arose.

Aggregate price of provisions.

D.

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ per lb.

—

—

Earnings of a family.

L. s. d.

— 51 8 0

2 $\frac{3}{4}$

—

—

— 51 3 10

3

—

—

—

— 53 2 4

3 $\frac{1}{4}$

—

—

— 47 16 0

3 $\frac{1}{2}$

—

—

—

— 50 1 11

3 $\frac{3}{4}$

—

—

—

— 50 17 11

4

—

—

— 50 10 8

B R E A D A L O N E.

D.

 $\frac{3}{4}$ per lb.

—

—

L. s. d.

— 47 5 10

1

—

—

—

— 51 9 6

1 $\frac{1}{4}$

—

—

—

— 51 17 11

1 $\frac{1}{2}$

—

—

— 50 12 3

1 $\frac{3}{4}$

—

—

—

— 50 12 11

2

—

—

—

— 51 16 4

“ WERE the price of provisions the director of that of labour, these
 “ tables would be in exact degradation; but the contrary is as near
 “ the truth: so very far is the rate of the one from the rule of the
 “ other, that they are mostly in opposition. Those who pay four-
 “ pence a pound, earn less, by three pounds a year, than others, who
 “ are fed at three-pence; the rate of three-pence half-penny is
 “ attended by less earnings, by six pounds a year, than three-pence.
 “ The lowest price of provisions, two-pence half-penny, is attended
 “ with eighteen shillings a year greater earnings than four-pence, the
 “ highest price.

“ IN

“ IN bread alone, the man who pays a penny a pound, earns as
“ much, within a few shillings, as he who pays two-pence, and he
“ who eats it at one penny farthing more. In whatever view the
“ table is thrown, the same contradictions appear; and, turn and
“ twist the comparison how you will, in no instance will you find
“ that labour is high, because provisions are the same; you will, in
“ more instances, find the reverse to be the fact.

“ BUT, in the name of common-sense, where are the facts, and
“ what are the reasonings, that prove a high rate of provisions an
“ enemy to manufactures? It is a matter, indeed, that has been taken
“ so much for granted, that these gentlemen have disdained to exercise
“ their powers of reasoning upon it: they give you an ipse dixit to
“ make what you can of.

“ LIVING must be rendered dear before that general industry, which
“ can alone support a manufacturing people, will be rooted amongst
“ them. There is not an instance in Europe of a country making
“ great advances in manufactures, while such country continued under
“ the possibility of labour being low. In those countries where ma-
“ nufactures make the greatest shoots, provisions are the highest; viz.
“ Holland and Britain. Yet, notwithstanding such high prices, who
“ will assert that manufactures are carried to greater perfection in
“ countries where provisions and labour are lower?

“ IT is a fact well known through all the manufacturing towns in
“ this kingdom, that the labouring poor work no more days in a week
“ than are sufficient to maintain themselves; the remainder is spent in
“ idleness.

“ WHEN provisions are very cheap, they are more distressed, and
“ their families more unhappy, than in the very dearest times; for a
“ man who wastes half his time in idleness, or, perhaps, in what is
“ worse, will be a poor workman the other half.”

THE anonymous author of “Thoughts on Trade and Commerce,”
strengthens Mr. Young’s observations, and even goes one step farther;
for he gives it as a maxim,

THAT dearth of provisions tends to lower the price of labour in
manufactories.

THE truth of this maxim is deduced from the conduct of our manufacturing populace, who do not labour, upon an average, more than four days in the week, unless when provisions are very dear; and when this is the case, he says, "a general industry prevails, workmen crowd about the houses of master-manufacturers, begging for work almost at any rate, and they work five or six days in the week, because the subsistence of their families demands this close application to labour."

"On the contrary, when provisions are at a low price, tipling houses and skittle-grounds are crowded, instead of their masters' court-yards; idleness and debauchery take place, labour grows scarce, masters are obliged to seek it, and to court the labourer to his work, sometimes at an advanced price, in one shape or another."

HE asserts likewise, "That when provisions are dear, from any cause, the labour of the poor is performed with care, with assiduity, and a regard to the pleasing their employer; and the workmen are kept sober, by which means the work is better performed; for he who, after a debauch, returns to his labour with an aching head, and trembling hand, will not perform it in a proper manner."

ON a supposition, which he takes for granted, but which I shall by no means admit, that our manufacturing populace in general are, (as he styles them) the most idle, debauched, and luxurious, of any in Europe, he recommends enforcing them to industry and sobriety, and to moderate labour six days in the week; but he would not have them receive more for six days application than for four. He quotes Sir William Temple's observation: "Of such force is habit, that the change from constant labour to constant ease is as difficult and disagreeable as from constant ease to constant labour;" and very unfairly wrests it to the purpose of proving, that it would be better for the state, and for the labourer, if he were to receive six shillings for six days labour, instead of earning the same in four.

HE then draws the contrast between the dissolute manners of our manufacturing populace, and the industrious poor of Holland, who work six days in the week cheerfully, pay a much greater part of their incomes in taxes on the necessities of life, and yet, by their frugality
and

and sobriety, support themselves and families more decently than the English. Indolence and ease are luxuries he lays to the charge of our labouring people. "All the taxes on the necessaries they consume operate to prevent this fatal indulgence, and therefore should be the last to be abolished." Brandy, gin, tea, sugar, foreign fruit, strong beer, printed linens, snuff, tobacco, &c. &c. are the superfluities which, he says, our poor consume in such heaps; and, as he would have the taxes on the bare necessaries of life continued, by the same rule those on these luxuries should be doubled; and yet all this load of taxes, it seems, ought not to raise the price of labour, nor injure our foreign commerce in manufactures.

THE man who could dedicate his treatise to the late EARL of HALIFAX, and call him the COLBERT of the age, some may think, does not deserve an answer; but as many parts of his performance shew a knowledge of commerce, which may recommend him to government, and his evident design is to flatter the present administration, and to encourage those contemptible notions respecting the labouring poor, which our great men have lately been fond of, he is to them a dangerous adversary; for such writings find admittance into the cabinets of ministers and princes, while the most sacred truths, if they arraign the conduct of government in any department, or in any instance, are treated as the visionary legends of disturbed imaginations; and Bedlam is recommended to the authors, instead of the offices of dignity and confidence they ought to hold in the state, both at home and abroad, for the benefit of its commercial interests.

LASTLY, this author cites the authorities of Sir WILLIAM PETTY, Sir JOSIAH CHILD, Mr. POLIXFEN, Mr. GEE, and some other writers, to confirm the observation, "that trade can never be greatly extended, where the necessaries of life are very cheap."

SUCH is the substance of the arguments against the labouring interest of this country, and of the encouragement given to master-manufacturers, farmers, and handicraftsmen, to keep down the prices of labour, notwithstanding any advance in the price of the necessaries, or superfluities of life, consumed by their workmen and labourers.

IN deference to the great authorities I have consulted on the other side of the question, and to avoid even the appearance of partiality, I shall reserve my own opinion, till I have given their arguments all the weight they deserve.

I SHALL cite, in the first place, the judicious remarks of that admired commercial writer, Mr. POSTLETHWAITE.

“ IT is a trite remark in the mouths of too many, that if the industrious poor can obtain enough to maintain themselves in five days, they will not work the whole six; whence they infer the necessity of even the necessaries of life being made dear by taxes, or any other means, to compel the working artisan and manufacturer to labour the whole six days in the week without ceasing. I must beg leave to differ in sentiment from those great politicians, who contend for the perpetual slavery of the working people of this kingdom; they forget the vulgar adage, all work and no play.

“ HAVE not the English boasted of the ingenuity and dexterity of their working artists and manufacturers, which have hitherto given credit and reputation to British wares in general? What has this been owing to? To nothing more, probably, than the relaxation of the working people in their own way. Were they obliged to toil the year round, the whole six days in the week, in a repetition of the same work, might it not blunt their ingenuity, and render them stupid, instead of alert and dexterous; and might not our workmen lose their reputation, instead of maintaining it by such eternal slavery?

“ HAVE not all wise nations instituted holidays, sports, and pastimes, for the diversion of the mass of the people? To what end? Certainly, to give them a fresh relish for their labour. And, if they had not unbendings, we may presume they would pine away, and become enervated in body, as well as marred in understanding; and what sort of workmanship could we expect from such hard-driven animals?

“ However some London workmen may, now and then, impair their healths by drunkenness and debauchery, the bulk of the industrious

“dustrious artificers and manufacturers throughout the kingdom do
 “otherwise; and, when they do make a holiday, they will easily
 “fetch the lost time up, as they term it, in cases of piece-work; and
 “many of them will execute as much work in four days, as a French-
 “man does in five or six. But, if Englishmen are to be eternal
 “drudges, it is to be feared they will degenerate below the French-
 “men. As our people are famed for bravery in war, do we not say
 “that it is owing to good English roast beef and pudding in their
 “bellies, as well as our constitutional spirit of liberty? And why may
 “not the superior ingenuity and dexterity of our artists and manu-
 “facturers be owing to that freedom and liberty they enjoy, to divert
 “themselves in their own way? And, I hope, we shall never have
 “them deprived of such privileges, and of that good living from
 “whence their ingenuity, no less than their courage, may proceed.
 “However, some regulations may be necessary, even for the diversions
 “of the industrious poor.”

THE sentiments of Mr. Postlethwaite have been adopted by several
 other writers; but by none has the cause of the labouring poor been so
 well supported, as by the author of *Considerations on the Policy, Com-
 merce, and Circumstances of this Kingdom*. He has combated the reign-
 ing folly of our landholders, (who consider our useful labourers in every
 branch of art and industry, as an insolent, unruly, debauched popu-
 lace, fit only to be held in oppressive subjection,) with a laudable spirit,
 and merits the sincere thanks of every good citizen. When I have
 given his intelligent observations, I shall have stated every thing ma-
 terial that has hitherto been offered to the public on this interesting
 subject.

AFTER mentioning that it has been fashionable of late to join in loud
 outcries against the working people of this kingdom, on account of
 pretended extortionate wages, and likewise for idleness and vice, he
 gives us the following material information.

“IT is however a fact sufficiently notorious, that the rates of la-
 “bour have not risen in proportion to the increase of taxes, and the
 “prices of provisions, and other necessaries of life.

“ FROM Mr. Hume’s works we learn, that in the reign of Henry
“ VII. the wages of a bricklayer, mason, tyler, &c. were ten-pence
“ a day. Sir William Petty mentions the wages of an husbandman to
“ be about four shillings a week, which was eight pence a day ; and
“ those of working tradesmen (in which order we must include manu-
“ facturers) to be two shillings, and half a crown a day, in the reign
“ of Charles II. in which reign, he says, lands were worth but twenty
“ years purchase. And Mr. Locke says, that the wages of a labourer,
“ in the reign of Queen Anne, were twelve-pence a day. Let me add
“ too, from good information, that in the reign of George I. the late
“ Earl of Lincoln paid the many workmen he employed for several
“ years, in improving his park and gardens of Oatlands in Surry, seven
“ shillings a week, which was fourteen pence a day.

“ THUS we see how land has risen in value since the reign of Charles
“ the Second; it being now nearly doubled in many parts of the kingdom;
“ while even superior workmens wages have little increased in any;
“ but, on the contrary, in many parts have become reduced, even as
“ low as those instanced to be given by the late Earl of Lincoln to his
“ mere labourers. And as for labourers, their wages at present are
“ but ten-pence a day in some places, nor in any, I believe, more than
“ twelve-pence, in the common course of business. Yet almost the
“ whole of our enormous taxes have been laid on since the reign of
“ Charles II. many of which fall intirely upon the labouring part of
“ the people, and all greatly affect them in the prices of provisions,
“ and other necessaries of life.

“ EVERY tax laid upon commodities is supposed to be at least
“ doubled by traders on consumers, and most commonly greatly more.
“ The same likewise has been the case with regard to the prices of
“ cheese, butter, and many other essential necessaries of life to the
“ poor : and the like may probably be said even of house-rent, if the
“ window-tax is included; in order to make savings in which latter, we
“ see the poor wretches in many cottages almost deprive themselves of
“ light.

“ THUS, while lands have been nearly doubling in their value, and
“ the profits of home dealings have been more than doubling on taxes,

“ the prices of labour have, in many callings, been diminished, in
“ others kept unvaried, and in none raised proportionally to the ad-
“ vancement of other property, or the altered rates of things. Yet,
“ unequal as their treatment has been, those unhappy, distressed, op-
“ pressed, and useful people, have become the objects of abuse through-
“ out the kingdom.

“ INDUSTRY, like every other exertion of human powers, whether
“ of the body or mind, requires its proper stimulations. To toil in-
“ cessantly in want, is too hard a condition for a human creature to
“ endure. Men will not be laborious, but on the prospect of reaping
“ some enjoyment therefrom; nay, it would be the most detestable
“ tyranny to require it on other terms. The want of due encourage-
“ ment must naturally make men sink into despondency, or plunge
“ into desperation; which are such evils as government ought to guard
“ against with the utmost care.

“ EVERY man who honestly endeavours to obtain such comforts of
“ life as are suitable to his station, by skill and industry in his calling,
“ must be fully intitled to the enjoyment of them. They are no more
“ than his implied conditional and constitutional dues from the com-
“ munity, of which there is no member more valuable; and should
“ he find himself deprived of them, either by artifice or force, and has
“ no other means of remedy left, he must, and will have recourse to
“ the laws of nature, which are imprinted on his heart, and operate
“ through all his feelings. One way or other, he will find himself
“ necessitated to shift as well as he can. He will either separate from
“ that society, to search for a better lot, which numbers of such
“ people have already done, and are yet doing; or he will turn preyer
“ on the community, in which he had been preyed upon, and wherein
“ he could not comfortably subsist by a better kind of practice.

“ As landlords have strove to keep down the price of labour, in
“ order to raise the value of their own property, so farmers and master-
“ workmen have done the same, for the enhancement of their own
“ gains; while, at the same time, they were likewise practising every
“ artifice for raising the prices of their commodities. From these par-
“ tial

" tial and self-interested sources have been circulated throughout the
 " kingdom the insidious reproaches of exorbitant demands of wages,
 " and the too general accusations of vicious extravagance in those who
 " had it not in their power to be guilty of the offence. Such have
 " been the effects of a prevailing rapacious spirit; so much the more
 " to be censured, as those who suffer them have been the means of
 " giving affluence to their accusers; nay the people to whom we are
 " not only indebted for individual conveniencies and felicities, but
 " also for the whole of our national powers. Yet to them, for their
 " utility, the state indisputably owes convenience, encouragement,
 " and protection; which government should ensure to them, as their
 " natural and social dues.

" THAT there may be grounds of complaint for exorbitant demands
 " of pay for some kinds of labour, especially in the metropolis and its
 " neighbourhood, will be readily allowed, particularly with regard to
 " some kinds of portage, and occasionally in other ways. All such
 " abuses are deserving of restraint; but they ought not to be made the
 " grounds of general reproach. Regulations in many matters may be
 " needful; but let oppressions be removed."

IT is now my business to draw precision and truth from this ample
 field of argument, and to decide the merits of the cause on true com-
 mercial principles. If, in this attempt, I meet with the same appro-
 bation from my readers in general, as I was honoured with from dif-
 ferent audiences, when I delivered my sentiments on this head in lec-
 tures, I shall think myself greatly overpaid for the pains I have taken.

FROM Mr. Young's arguments, and his table, I clearly discover,
 that when provisions are dear, labour is cheap; for if it does not rise
 in any degree of proportion, there wants little logic to prove, that the
 master is the gainer by the high price of food; and the author of
 " Thoughts on Trade and Commerce," informs us, that when pro-
 visions are dear, industry is enforced, and more work is performed.
 If we combine these ideas, another proposition of Mr. Young will be
 readily admitted.

" An high rate of provisions is no enemy to manufactures;" for we
 see more work is done, and cheaper in proportion, when they are

high, than when they are at a low rate. It follows likewise, that the proprietors of manufactories, or the masters of the various branches of the mechanic arts and trades, employing a number of poor workmen, have no right to complain of this situation of things.

If dearness of provisions tends to lower, rather than to raise the price of labour, as we have seen by Mr. Young's calculation, by the assertions of the author of "Thoughts on Trade and Commerce," and by the corroborating proofs carefully extracted from history by the writer of "Considerations on the Policy, Commerce, and Circumstances of the Kingdom;" the next point to be determined is, Whether an high rate of provisions, and a low one of labour, is beneficial or detrimental to manufactures, since all our authorities agree, that they never flourish in countries where they are both very low?

By answering this question properly, we shall bring the contest into a smaller compass, and be able to account for the murmurs and insurrections of the poor labouring people, when provisions are extravagantly dear in England; we shall likewise trace the enhanced value of our manufactures, the defectiveness of their quantity and quality, in comparison of former times, and the decline of some branches of our foreign commerce.

THE advocate for the poor has one advantage on his side, he cannot be suspected of selfish views; but he has much to fear, on the other hand, from the passions, prejudices, and power of the rich, and of men of corrupt principles in high places. To them this elucidation of a subject, in which the dearest interests of their country will be found to clash with their manners and conduct, cannot but be very ungrateful; nor can I flatter myself with the prospect, that they will promote the circulation of a work, wherein the author will be frequently obliged to mention them in terms that they may think reprehensible; but which, nevertheless, proceed from the conviction of truth, and a sincere desire to serve its sacred cause, at the expence of ignorance, obstinacy, corruption, prodigality, or avarice, wherever it is to be found opposing, or, which is the same thing in effect, gradually undermining the power, credit, and wealth of the whole community.

THE

THE candid part of mankind will, I believe, allow me to say, that provisions, and all other necessaries of life, are not only at an high rate at present in England, but at an exorbitant price. I might therefore beg leave to amend my question; but I disclaim this advantage; and I will venture to affirm, that no country can long maintain its arts and manufactures in such a flourishing condition, as to make them answer the purposes of universal commerce, while provisions continue dear for any length of time, and the price of labour disproportionately low; and that this is the case with us, will appear plainly from a review of the extracts I have laid before my readers.

THAT our arts, manufactures, and commerce must decline from this melancholy situation of affairs, remains to be proved; in doing which I shall necessarily expose the false principles that have brought us into these unhappy circumstances; and I shall, with all deference, recommend the true principles, by which we may restore plenty, ease, and content to the poor, and insure lasting prosperity to our manufacturing interest.

THE ingenious Dr. Cadogan, whose dissertation on the gout does equal honour to his skill as a physician, and to his humanity as a member of society, has told us, "That the original causes of all chronic diseases, are either indolence, intemperance, or vexation*."

THE two last, as the causes of imbecility and mortality, I mean to apply to my subject; for as to the first, notwithstanding the natural propensity of mankind, it is agreed on all hands, that the poor, when provisions are dear, cannot generally give way to it.

WITH respect to intemperance, chiefly in the article of drinking, there is but too much truth in the charge brought against our labouring poor on this head; but I believe it is made too universal; for certainly, the farther you go from the metropolis, the more sobriety and œconomy you discover in the lower classes of the people.

BUT what is the cause, for the most part, of this intemperance? Here the author of "Thoughts on Trade and Commerce," has at-

* See Dissertation on the Gout, and all Chronic Diseases, Sixth Edition, London, printed for J. Doddsley, 1771.

tempted to mislead the public. It is not a disposition to idleness, (we are not to tax any body of people with the vices of a few worthless wretches, to be found in every class, and in all ranks of life), for I maintain it, the English common people in general, are the most industrious, labouring people, and rid the most work in a short time, of any in Europe.

IT is the vexation and distress of mind, when provisions, and the necessaries of life, are so dear, that they cannot even maintain their families by incessant toil, that often drives them to hopeless despondency; and, in this temper of mind, government has set open every avenue to that fatal relief from sorrow, drinking; for tipling-houses and skittle-grounds are the resources of our wretched system of finances. If these are not connived at, and suffered in too great numbers, all over England, the revenues must fall short, and the luxurious land-holder at last be obliged to pay his true quota of the public expences, to make good the deficiency. With what face can any writer charge the labouring people so home with debauchery, and talk of COLBERTS at the helm of government, while it avowedly draws a main branch of its support from their intemperance?

LET the laws be enforced by the magistrates, and let the ale-houses, taverns, and inns, be obliged to shut up in all the capital cities of the kingdom at ten o'clock, and, in the small towns and villages, at nine at night, having first cleared them of all persons not belonging to the families, and we may be assured of putting a stop to the intemperance, debauchery, and luxury of our labouring poor; but, I am afraid, we shall thereby overturn the seats in the treasury, and erase from the court list, a numerous company of placemen and pensioners, for want of money to support that idle, corrupt crew of sycophants. Such a scheme might be desirable in a virtuous republic, but would only destroy the system of government in a degenerate, mixed monarchy, where the majority in two of the three estates of the realm, are, by these douceurs, made subservient to the absolute will of the third.

THE same reasoning will hold good with respect to every article of the necessaries of life consumed by the poor, on which there are any

taxes or excises. Restrain the luxury they enjoy in the consumption of tea, sugar, brandy, geneva, strong beer, tobacco, and snuffs, and you will either ruin the public credit of the kingdom, by disabling the treasury to pay the interest of the national debt, or they must invent new taxes, which, in some other shape, will affect manufactures more sensibly than the present excises on these articles.

WE have been told, that if industry was enforced, by obliging the manufacturing populace to labour six days in the week, instead of four, for the same wages; the work would be better performed, their sobriety would render them careful, and the necessity of such close attention, in order to provide food and raiment for their families, in dear seasons, would make them assiduous to please; but the very reverse is to be apprehended, nay, is actually experienced, where, from absolute necessity, the poor are thus oppressed, by the combined plagues of dearness of provisions, incessant labour, and low wages. Having no hopes of bettering their condition, which every rational person has in view, on his making choice of any vocation in life, indifference will take place of emulation, and thus the main springs of industry will be destroyed; for he who never entertains the idea of diminishing the weight of his dependency, either on himself or others, for his subsistence; or of enjoying due repose, and easy circumstances, suited to his station, will grow callous to common misfortunes; he will see his family pining with hunger and nakedness, without using any extraordinary exertions of his abilities; he will carry his industry no further, than to procure them temporary and partial relief; and out of the little he earns by constant labour, he will retain a reserve, to purchase the cup of oblivion, to enable him to forget, for a few hours occasionally, the galling yoke of double bondage, to a hard-hearted, mercenary master, and a numerous, distressed family.

CAN it be expected, that the labour or industry of a person so situated, will be equal to that of him, who is generously paid, in a degree proportioned to the advantages derived from his ingenuity, close application, or hard bodily labour; who sets about his work with a chearful, contented mind, which gives strength and activity to his body?

IN the one case, you must be satisfied with the common drudgery of an enervated slave; in the other, you may expect new efforts of ingenuity, extraordinary exertions of abilities, and every good effect of a mind at peace, and a body in the vigour of health.

HOLD out an adequate reward, suited to any given station in life, and how eagerly do we all enter the lists, to contend for the prize! What uncommon talents, what wonderful operations, almost beyond all rational expectation, are not men stimulated to, by encouragement! Adapt but your recompence to the rank, dispositions, and powers of mankind, and you will always find these good effects from them. I speak not of bribery and corruption, but of the laudable incitements to commendable pursuits.

TAKE away your price, and display the sable banner of hopeless slavery, men will inlist under it, to avoid extreme distress; and the fear of punishment may prevent their desertion; but you must not confide in these mercenaries, in a day of severe trial: there can no friendship subsist between the master and the slave; there must be some tie of affinity, however remote, to ally men to each other by principle or sentiment. When this is not the case, the interest of the superior will never be pursued with alacrity and vigour by the inferior.

IN short, the human mind is not to be fettered; and therefore, where proper encouragement is given to the labouring poor, there every kind of art, every piece of work will be completely executed; it will be answerable in its quality to its price; there will be no perfidy on the part of the workman, no deceit concealed from the eye of the master, which, in the end, will deceive the consumer, and discredit the art or manufacture itself. Will any man, after this, pretend to say, that manufactures can be perfect, (the only way for them to prosper), where provisions are high, and labour low; by which all encouragement is taken away from the poor fabricator? Or, will it any longer be matter of surprize, that we have so many complaints lately of slight work, bad fabrics, and concealed defects, particularly in woollen cloths, stuffs, and Manchester goods? Let me ask the opulent manufacturer, merchant, or tradesman, if he thinks six or seven shillings sufficient

wages for six days hard labour ? Yet, if I am rightly informed, many of the Manchester weavers do not earn more ; and the consequence is, that their families have scarce a shoe or stocking to their feet. Yet the masters there, their factors in London, the exporters of their commodities, and the shop-keepers who retail them, for the most part, live in affluence, and are people of great property.

BUT if an high rate of provisions, and a disproportionate price of labour, are not enemies to manufactures, whence comes it, that our most staple commodities are grown worse in their several kinds, and their price, at the same time, considerably enhanced ? We are now coming very near to disagreeable truths.

IT will be said, the large demands from our old colonies, and our new acquisitions since the peace, have contributed to raise the prices, perhaps to hurry and flight the work, and have likewise augmented the value of the first materials, by their scarcity. But what does this prove ? More than it ought : That if our demand for exportation renders the consumption at home too dear, or makes the manufacture inferior to its usual standard, to the detriment of the home-consumer ; our commerce, in this respect, proceeds upon false principles ; and, while it enriches individuals, is detrimental to the state. The effects of such a commerce shall be demonstrated in its proper place.

IT will be acknowledged however, by some manufacturers, that there is a scarcity of hands for the manufacturing branches. I readily join in this opinion, but not in the imputed cause of it, the idleness and debauchery of the common people. The true cause is, want of proper encouragement, owing to the prevailing notions favoured by men in power, of humbling, debasing, and keeping poor, all sorts of country labourers and workmen ; while they care not what indulgence they give to menial, domestic servants ; generally speaking, the real scum of the earth. Must not the farmer, or middling country shop-keeper, be mad or stupid, who sends his son out to be apprentice seven years to an art, which will afford him afterwards only seven shillings per week journeyman's wages ; or to follow daily labour at one shilling, or even fifteen pence per diem, when, for a very small
expence,

expence, the flying waggon or machine will transport him to London, where, at sixteen years of age, he may be a driver of a post-chaise, a lady's foot-boy, or twenty other things, by which he will gain more in vails, card-money, or other perquisites, than a country labourer's wages, besides being provided with good cloaths, and luxuriously boarded?

OR, what sensible parents would put their girls out to spin and card wool for three shillings per week, when they can send them to the metropolis, and its environs, to receive the most exorbitant wages, to insist on their own conditions, to chuse their families, to distinguish between hard and easy places; in fine, to indulge themselves in every extravagance of dress and good living; and, if they are sober, discreet girls, by the arts of genteel service, to lay by sufficient funds to settle in life as substantial traders, by marrying footmen, or valets, who have had the same opportunities of amassing from the sons of riot and dissipation?

A LIST was lately put into my hands of upwards of one thousand ale-house-keepers, green-grocers, chandlers, oil-shops, and other retail traders, in London, and the villages adjacent, all of whom were originally footmen and servant-maids; and I am assured, by very accurate calculators, that no less than ten thousand male and female servants (foreigners and natives) might be spared from London, and twenty miles round it, if luxury were not carried to the most destructive height. Yet, such is the spirit of the rich, for distressing inferior housekeepers, that they encourage these useless wretches in their exorbitant demands, and insolent behaviour, insomuch, that families in the middle classes of life can hardly procure servants at any rate. They just take a turn or two in such families, to see how they like them, and then leave them insolently and impertinently. For the truth of this, I appeal to the bulk of the house-keepers of London, in the middle classes of life. Yet no remedy is proposed for this real grievance, though it is a manifest cause of the scarcity of manufacturing and labouring hands in the country, and of provincial depopulation.

I WILL venture to propose one, which, in my humble opinion, would

would operate the most salutary effects in favour of agriculture, population, and manufactures.

LET a tax of forty shillings per annum be laid on every domestic servant of both sexes, of whatever denomination; all porters, apprentices, journeymen, and other workmen, in every art, manufacture, and trade, excepted. By such a regulation, all supernumerary servants, the useless pageants of pride and luxury, will either be discharged, or a revenue of some consequence will arise to government for the public service. I shall take it for granted, however, that ten thousand useless hands would be discharged from all the capital cities in the kingdom, and restored to agriculture, arts, and manufactures, by means of this tax. If only one in ten of these marries, and settles in some manufacturing town, or in some village, where there is a want of hands in the farming branch, and every third marriage produces only one child, who lives to an age to be capable of labour, we need only add this increase to the work performed by their parents, and we shall find the complaint of the scarcity of hands redressed in a very short time.

BUT we actually labour at present under a scarcity, as well as an extravagant price, of many kinds of provisions, particularly butcher's meat; the wanton, luxurious consumption of which, beyond the real wants of nature, exceeds the produce. Any one in the least acquainted with the riotous living of servants, with their waste, prodigality, and daintiness, in London alone, will be at no loss to discover that we should contribute largely to the restoring of plenty in this article by our plan; for the scheme of life of a poor hard-labouring country-man or woman must be quite different from that of the pampered city-servant, fed at the cost of his master. The wages of the industrious manufacturer, we have already seen, will not allow of a liberal consumption of butcher's meat, much less for wasting, or throwing it away, because its quality does not suit a dainty palate.

AN objection may be made to my proposal, on the behalf of the lower classes of housekeepers, who keep only one maid-servant, and can hardly afford that, yet know not how to dispense with such a necessary assistant.

My answer is, that in one family out of three, this is an imaginary want they have no right to gratify in their situation and circumstances, especially where there are not a number of children; and I will add, what has passed under my own observation; that reputable mechanic artists and tradesmen, of the lower classes of citizens, in Flanders and in Holland, know not what it is to keep a maid-servant; the mistress alone, or the mistress, assisted by her *fille de boutique* (her shop-girl), performs all the necessary functions of the cook or house-maid; and though our inferior citizens wives are too proud and indolent to think of such sort of œconomy, yet this must not prevent my declaring, that the true principles of trade require frugality, parsimony, and simplicity, in the conduct of this class of citizens, in a commercial state. But, admitting the expediency of their keeping one maid, in these luxurious times, my plan must be beneficial to them otherwise; for either the price of wages must be reduced to its old standard, four pounds, instead of six or seven, now foolishly given, or they must deduct the tax from the present exorbitant demands of servants. For my own part, when I beheld the insurrection of the weavers, I was only astonished at their mistaking their object; for surely nothing can be so absurd in a well-regulated government, as to suffer the most useful hands in the trading and commercial interest, to languish and pine away with hunger and distress, while these slaves of idleness, and panders to lust, are cloathed, fed, and better paid, than soldiers, sailors, or manufacturers, the vital arteries of the commonwealth. I shuddered lest their resentment should be turned against the liveried laquais, foreign valets, and insolent waiting maids. In a nation that had no foreign commerce, this group of extravagant consumers might be accounted beneficial; but in a country, dependent on foreign demands, for its superfluous produce, in the most improved state (manufactured), they are a great detriment to the common interest. Their industry should be employed to increase the quantity of food, raiment, and works of ingenuity; the increase of the quantity of the necessities of life would necessarily add to the number of the people, by encouraging matrimony; and this again would tend to the augmentation of the superfluities for export, by regular progression.

HERE the complaint of high wages is just; and it is a reproach to administration, that it has not been redressed. In proportion as provisions have risen, the menial servant, who does not contribute to the maintenance of the family (like an apprentice or workman) should have lowered his demands, to allow for the extra-expence of his cloathing and subsistence. The reverse has been the case; but here again, the miserable state of our revenues interferes to countenance, rather than to check, the exorbitant wages, idleness, and debauchery of household servants. This point therefore must be resumed under the head of FINANCES.

I SHALL now confidently assert, that another real cause of provincial depopulation, of the defective qualities of our manufactures, and of their enhanced prices, is the false principle of not raising workmens wages, in proportion to the very high price of provisions of late years, or to the profits derived from their industry; and this leads me to cast a retrospective eye on the frugal, plain, honest manners of our master-manufacturers, artists, and handicraft-men, predecessors to the *present* race, and to compare them with *their* costly dress, carriages, elegant furniture, luxurious tables, country-houses, numerous menial servants, and expensive amusements. When I calculate the amount of these, and find that they must all be extracted from the sweat of the poor labourer's brow, or from an inferiority of quality (to the price) in the commodity, I am not surprized that my English broad-cloth is no longer so good as it used to be, nor my stockings so strong, though the price is raised. I hear, with concern, that these complaints are made abroad, that deceit in the lengths and breadths is added to the charge, and that the credit of our most staple manufactures is on the decline.

If the profits on manufactures were not very considerable, how happens it, that all this elegance of life is supported; and we hear of very few failures amongst the considerable manufacturers in our woollen, silk, and hard-ware branches. The true state of the matter is, that the price of labour is not advanced in proportion to that of provisions; that the profits of the proprietors of considerable manufactories are too great;

great; that poor artists, manufacturers, and artificers daily emigrate to foreign countries, and to our colonies. It is high time now to recur to the true principles of commerce, from which I deduce the following maxims.

I. THAT the wages of all labouring people ought to rise in proportion to an enhanced price of provisions, and of the necessaries of life; and I affirm it to be the case in Holland, and that they are so regulated by the states, upon all such occasions. This I advance, in answer to the author of "Thoughts on Trade and Commerce."

II. THAT the wages of workmen of every denomination, in a country that means to support the credit of its manufactures, and an extensive flourishing commerce, ought to be such as will give them a prospect of bettering their condition, and will permit them to enjoy occasional ease and plenty in their own way, suited to their humble state.

III. THAT if they bear a due proportion to the profits derived from their industry, this will always be the case, and their work will be performed with cheerfulness, vigour, expedition, and care to perfect it.

IV. THAT such encouragement will not tend to idleness and debauchery; unless idleness and debauchery is encouraged by the state, and has pervaded all ranks of life; but that, generally speaking, it will enable them to feed and cloath their families in a better manner, to the benefit of retail trade; and, from the former circumstance, their children will become stronger, and better enabled to labour for their own support, which again is an additional advantage to manufactures. Sir JAMES STUART observes, "That numbers, especially
" of children, among the lower classes, perish from the effects of indigence, either directly by want of food, or by diseases contracted
" gradually, from the want of convenient ease." The same excellent author, in answer to an assertion, "that the population of the British
" isles is not stopped for want of food, because one sixth part of the
" crop has been annually exported," maintains, "that it is still
" stopped for want of food; for the exportation only marks, that the
" home-

“ home-demand is satisfied ; but this does not prove that the inhabitants are full fed, although they can buy no more at the exportation price. Those who cannot buy are exactly those who, I say, die for want of subsistence ; could they buy, they would live and multiply, and perhaps no grain would be exported.” If these remarks are true, and, from the accuracy of the writer, there is little reason to doubt it, how necessary must the encouragement be, I have just pointed out ? for, if they can hardly find means to purchase bread, how are they to procure meat ? and, if they have not animal-food occasionally, their bodily condition will be so weak, that they will be as effectually dead to all the purposes of laborious industry, as if they no longer existed.

V. THAT the price of labour should be such as will excite them to multiply their species, and therefore this inducement to matrimony, should be considered as a first principle in the establishment and direction of all manufactories.

VI. THAT the number of menial servants in a manufacturing kingdom, ought to be as small as possible ; for we have seen how they deduct from provincial population, and render manufacturing hands scarce.

VII. THAT it is an infamous practice to settle with workmen at a pay-table in an ale-house ; and, in any other government, not dependent for its revenues on the intemperance of the people, it would be prohibited under the severest penalties.

I SHALL now close this subject, by refuting the opinion of those, who assert, that our manufacturing populace are an idle, debauched people, contrasted with those of other nations. I must take up the charge as I find it ; it is given as a general one. In Flanders I have had an opportunity of observing their workmen in most branches : they are indolent to an extreme, and both slow and lazy in every thing they set about ; inasmuch, that I have seen a paviour sitting upon a stool to pave the streets ; and a linen-weaver, in the winter, obliged to disengage his left hand from a muff, to receive the shuttle he had thrown across the warp with his right hand ; and, every now and then, another

ther interruption occurred, to wipe off the ashes from his pipe that had fallen on the web. If we deduct likewise the time spent in their devotions, there will be no comparison between six days labour of a Flemish manufacturer, or artist, and four days of an Englishman. Days of obligation of mass, matins and vespers, occasional confessions, and favourite saints days, are to be taken into the account of lost time. From Flanders I have made excursions into Holland, a protestant country, where the last mentioned hindrances do not arise. Here I found the stupidity, sloth, obstinacy, and natural want of alertness and dexterity, peculiar to this people, such draw-backs on the produce of their labour, that I am amazed to find them quoted by an English writer as patterns of industry: nor are they quite so sober and frugal as they are represented; having no fixed theatres, they resort in an evening to *speil buyfen* (ale-houses, brandy and geneva shops), where there is constantly music and dancing. Upon the whole, I am certain, that an Englishman will finish a piece of work of any kind in four days, that a Dutchman will leave uncomplete at the end of six.

A VERY ridiculous circumstance occurs to my memory, which may serve, in some measure, to mark the genius of the Dutch populace. As I was walking one day on the quay at Middleburgh in Zealand, I saw four Dutchmen busily employed in embarking some cows on board a poon, to be transported to some other province of Holland. A butcher, two common porters on the quays, and the skipper of the poon, were the parties. They were greatly embarrassed by the stupidity of the cows, which however did not equal theirs; for they spread the slings on the quay, (a machine made of sail-cloth, or strong sack-ing, about three feet wide and four feet long, with cross bars of wood at each end, and iron rings to fasten to the tackle of the vessel; it passes under the animal's belly, and joins over the back, where the rings being secured in the hook of the tackle, it is, by this means, gently hoisted into the vessel, and let down into the hold :) the two first cows of six, occupied them for more than half an hour, and almost exhausted their patience; for, unluckily, they continually trode upon the sling, either with the fore, or hind feet. When the third was to be

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embarked,

embarked, the same thing happened, and I entreated them, as the cows were very gentle, to take up the sling, and pass it themselves properly under the belly of the animal ; but this not being the Dutch method, all my persuasions and remonstrances were ineffectual : the same perplexity ensued, and the Dutchmen swore most bitterly against the poor beast. At length my servant, and a French surgeon belonging to the garrison of Tervere, disengaged the sling from the cow's feet, and taking it up, the one passed an end under her belly, and the other received it on the opposite side, drew it tight over the back, to the great surprise of a croud of people ; and thus the remaining cows were embarked in a few minutes.

I know of no instances that can be brought of the ingenuity, or indefatigable industry of the Dutch workmen ; as to their merchants and shop-keepers, they deserve the highest commendations, for observing various rules in life, which make their manners strictly conformable to the true principles on which the prosperity of a commercial nation depends ; and their wisdom in this respect shall be treated of at large under the head of Universal Commerce.

If then the English workmen want only encouragement suited to their genius ; to the free, plentiful country they inhabit ; and to the customary way of their living in this country (when the avarice or the extravagancies of masters do not pinch them) it is the duty of a British legislature to interfere, to call the parties before them, to dive into the mysteries of arts and manufactures as much as possible, to examine evidences on both sides, to give the poor protection from the dread of revealing the truth, and to relieve the oppressed in every branch, that a spirit of emulation, an inclination to matrimony, and a full exertion of the powers of an honest, tractable, and, I will add, a sensible body of people, may take place, to the general advantage of arts, manufactures, and commerce.

BUT if the manufacturing and labouring poor still continue to groan under the weight of poverty, scanty food, and incessant labour, if the masters are still to raise princely fortunes at their expence, if the credit of our manufactures abroad is still to suffer through fraud and deceit,

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to add to their emoluments, and if a scarcity of hands is not prevented, by some of the means already pointed out: NATURALIZATION is another remedy proposed.

I HAVE given all the force imaginable to this expedient, under the article of Population, admitting the evil of depopulation to have taken root, and to be making large strides in a commercial kingdom; but I purposely reserved the objections, to be thrown in under the present head, because I was desirous, when stating the condition of our manufacturing poor, which occasions depopulation, to strike out a medium to avoid this violent remedy: that medium, we have seen, is, to give such encouragement to the manufacturing poor, as will restore our native population, the best we can have.

THERE is a fine passage in Sir JAMES STUART's Political OEconomy, on this subject, and as I have all along professed to inform and instruct, by authoritative precepts, of such weight as may add strength to my plan, and recommend the branches of education I think so necessary for British citizens, I shall make no apology for introducing it in this place.

“ WERE it possible to get a view of the general state of births and
 “ burials, in every class of the inhabitants of a country, marriage might
 “ surely be put upon a better footing than ever it has been, for pro-
 “ viding a determined number of good and wholesome recruits every
 “ year, towards national multiplication. This is walking in the light,
 “ and procuring whatever augmentation of hands you wish for. What
 “ difficulties may be found in the execution, nothing but experience
 “ can shew, and this, to a judicious eye, will point out the remedy.
 “ In my opinion, this will be far better than a general naturalization,
 “ which I take to be a leap in the dark: for however easy it may be
 “ to naturalize men, I believe nothing is so difficult as to naturalize
 “ customs and foreign habits; and the greatest blessing any nation can
 “ enjoy, is an uniformity of opinion upon every point which con-
 “ cerns public affairs, and the administration of them. When God
 “ blesses a people, he makes them unanimous, and bestows upon
 “ them a governor who loves them, and who is beloved, honoured,
 “ and

“ and respected by them. This, and this only, can create unanimity.”

It is indeed a leap in the dark to give all the rights and privileges of citizens, to an undistinguished herd of foreigners of different principles ; for, when you have admitted them for your own advantage, you are not sure that they will account it for their's, constantly to reside with you ; and if, on any sudden alterations in the policy and circumstances of the kingdom, they should desert you, they will carry off with them the arts, manufactures, and knowledge of commerce you have taught them.

If impolitic restraints, for instance, are laid on their mode of religion, if the climate disagrees with them, or if a scarcity of the necessities of life happens, you have not the same tie upon them as on natural-born subjects ; their relations, the very families they sprang from, may be still existing in the place of their nativity ; when therefore the ease and conveniencies which brought them amongst you cease, or seem but to cease for a time, they will leave you to return to their native countries.

THEY will likewise class together, and endeavour, as much as possible, to confine the circulation of inland trade within their own tribes ; they will employ a shoemaker or a taylor of their own body, in preference to natives ; and this will create such a partiality as will cause murmurs, quarrels, and insurrections amongst your own people. Examples may be seen of this nationality in the foreigners now residing in London, and even in the Scotch. The native English, on the contrary, are too generous, too liberal, to cherish such narrow sentiments ; strictly political, but not commercial.

A GENERAL naturalization might enable foreigners, in the end, to extirpate the native stock, to change the constitution of the country, and, from auxiliary aids in commerce, to become masters, and sole possessors. A commercial people are therefore subject to political revolutions of the most violent nature from such a measure ; and in no country could this consequence be so probable, as in a free state like Great Britain ; for a general naturalization supposes no bounds to be
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set as to numbers, professions, political, or religious tenets, or exotic manners and customs; and the acquisitions of property, from the profits of arts, manufactures, and commerce, could not, in this case, be circumscribed; we will therefore suppose for a moment, that such a general naturalization had taken place in England as should cause a great influx of inhabitants, professing the Roman Catholic religion; as soon as these had acquired property, and a majority of interest in different counties, is it likely they would suffer the present disqualifications of persons professing that religion, which exclude them from the enjoyment of places of trust and emolument in the state? Certainly not; they would annul them; and then your boasted constitution would lose its main pillar, and fall to the ground. The same reasoning must hold good with respect to Jews, Turks, and Pagans; yet a country wholly dependent on the flourishing state of its arts and manufactures, as the basis of universal commerce, without which it could not subsist, must run all these risks; if extreme depopulation prevails, if the small number of its manufacturing and labouring populace are idle, debauched, and luxurious to excess, and if government either neglects, or will not apply milder remedies in time.

A PARTIAL naturalization is not subject to the foregoing objections; on the contrary, the occasional naturalization of ingenious, industrious artists and manufacturers, who bring with them new inventions, or improvements, or of opulent persons, who add to the relative riches of the state, proceeds on true commercial principles, and is adopted by all wise legislatures.

BUT a partial naturalization supposes exceptions and limitations both political and commercial. A protestant state is left at liberty to chuse only foreign protestants, and to prefer artists and manufacturers, to priests and monks, and, in general, to all useless, idle hands. Such a naturalization, therefore, in the hands of a discreet government, will always prove highly beneficial to commerce; and the most excellent method of conducting it is, that observed in England, by bringing bills into parliament for that purpose, where the expediency

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or inexpediency of the measure may be freely debated, before it takes place.

In case however, a nation should be so circumstanced, that its population cannot be sufficiently increased, so as to supply the proper number of hands for its manufactures by partial naturalization; that the milder remedies before proposed have failed; and yet, that matters are not in such a desperate situation, as to oblige government to have recourse to a general naturalization, there is still another door open to relief.

A GENERAL introduction of mechanical machines into arts and manufactures, to supply the labour of mankind.

To avoid a general naturalization, I would go any lengths; but under no other circumstances, but those of a plague, or a devastation by fire, inundation, or the sword, should such machines receive the sanction of government.

THE authors of any repute who have investigated the question, whether mechanical machines are prejudicial or beneficial to manufactures and trade, have treated the matter partially, having made no distinction between such as serve to facilitate, shorten, or abridge the labour of mankind, and those which have a tendency to lessen their numbers, to discourage population, to defeat industry, and to impoverish a trading country. It will easily be perceived, that I do not mean to contend against the utility of the first; I readily admit, that all proper encouragement ought to be given to these, and that both reason and experience have demonstrated their utility.

OF this kind are the plough, the common wind and water mills, hand-mills, all looms, and a variety of other inventions, too many to enumerate; every work of ingenuity and utility of this species, deservedly meets with approbation and reward in all commercial nations, but in none to so great a degree as in England, for which we have been greatly indebted of late years to the laudable society of whom I have already made honourable mention.

THE ingenious Mr. MOORE's new inventions seem to be of this class; for both his coach, and his cart, are intended to diminish the demand
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for horses throughout the kingdom, and, by that means, to lower the exorbitant price of provisions, by turning more land into tillage, instead of pursuing the present abominable practice of increasing pasture-lands; and whoever seriously considers all the bad consequences of the following facts, must (if not biased by self-interest) wish well to such inventions.

HALF the produce of the lands of England is now consumed by horses of various kinds, some kept for business, but more for parade and pleasure.

AN horse, at three years old, may be worth fifteen guineas; the best ox at that age is not worth more than eight.

THESE are abuses of agriculture, which I mean more strongly to impress on your minds in the general recapitulation of the elements of commerce, at the conclusion of that subject.

BUT the machines I never wish to see introduced into a commercial nation, (which is required to be fully peopled, that is, to have a sufficient number of hands for all the classes of life already described) are SAW-MILLS, and inventions of that stamp, which are calculated to exclude the labour of thousands of the human race, who are usefully employed in dock-yards, in those of timber-merchants, private ship, and house-builders, cabinet-makers, &c. A more pernicious scheme could not be devised. Nor was I at all surprized that such an erection, in so populous a county as Middlesex, was secretly destroyed. It gave me concern, as it always will, to see the populace do themselves justice in any instance; for this destroys the order of civil society; but, I own, I was no less rejoiced to see the reward for the discovery of the offenders prove ineffectual. Indeed it would have been a pity to have had occasion to arraign the clemency of a most merciful prince, which, I am afraid, would have been the case, had they been apprehended and convicted; for the demolition of Mr. Dingley's mill was deemed to be a piece of party-resentment.

It is possible there may be counties in England where one such machine might be wanted, from the scarcity of hands for other branches; but surely every other expedient should have been first

tried ; and here give me leave to hint at one, which I must necessarily resume in another place. Would not our felons be much better employed in preventing the necessity of such machines, than by transporting them ?

REFLECTIONS on the destructive consequences of machines of this nature, to the true interests of mankind, made the celebrated Montesquieu find fault even with water-mills ; and other modern writers, complain of the abuse of mechanism, in carrying it to too great perfection. Instances of other machines, resembling the saw-mills, have not occurred to me ; I believe they are rare, because they are very justly discouraged in populous countries.

IN short, if we carefully review the reciprocal connection and dependency on each other, of agriculture, population, arts, manufactures, and inland trade ; we cannot possibly give our assent to the general introduction of such machines as have a tendency, by breaking one link in this regular chain, to derange and damage the whole.

I HAVE now, I believe, fully illustrated the commercial principles which give life and vigour to the circulation of inland trade, and I have applied them, as I proceeded, to the present state of the useful arts and manufactures, chiefly as they regard the internal circumstances of the kingdom, only occasionally mentioning the different effects of true or false principles, on universal commerce, as they unavoidably occurred in this part of my work. My next business will be, to note the true principles of universal commerce, confining myself solely to that object, and to apply them to the present state of the commerce of Great Britain, and her colonies.

P A R T IV.

ON UNIVERSAL COMMERCE.

IF we could suppose it possible for nations to subsist secure and happy within themselves, without any commercial intercourse with each other, we should have no occasion to extend our speculations any farther; to say the truth, we need not, in that case, have taken the pains to point out and illustrate the principles by which agriculture, population, and manufactures, may be carried to their highest degree of perfection and success; for necessity, the fruitful mother of invention, would naturally attach mankind to the labour requisite to supply the pressing wants of nature; the earth would, therefore, be cultivated, so as to produce food in a proportionate degree to the number of inhabitants living together in one community; the multiplication of the people would be in proportion to the food produced, and the demand for implements of labour, cloathing, and habitations, would, through the same necessity, give birth and subsistence to mechanic arts, and to some manufactures; finally, the reciprocal communications of the different orders of the people, in order to supply each others wants, would promote the circulation of inland trade, and support a number of shopkeepers.

BUT all this might happen, without any extraordinary efforts of the human genius, or exciting any uncommon exertions of industry and application, by motives of profit and honour. All artificial wants being unknown in such a society, and no desire entertained of improving their situation and circumstances, they would not stand in need of any

foreign products, to administer to the ease or convenience of life ; nor could they think of sending any of their own out of their country, as they would have no idea of utility or benefit to be derived from any article, to be exchanged for them. The only foreign connection you could suppose them to have would be with their neighbours, whom, through motives of humanity, they might assist with food or raiment, if such assistance was implored, in times of scarcity and distress. But even this is granting rather too much in their favour ; for it is a question, whether a people, so limited and confined in their notions, would be capable of sentiments of benevolence. It is the general opinion that they would not ; for it is maintained, “ that the common
“ offices of humanity, shewn by one nation to another, are founded
“ on the law of nations, the principles of which are derived from the
“ commercial intercourses of mankind.”

SOME political writers, and several philosophers, have bestowed great encomiums on such systems of nature as we have just described ; they say, “ That a people living without foreign commerce are virtuous,
“ frugal, temperate, and long-lived, being utter strangers to all the
“ vices which foreign luxuries introduce, and to those intemperate debauches, which debilitate and wear out the human constitution :” they assert, “ That, as they have less cause, they are not so subject to
“ quarrels, divisions, factions, tumults, insurrections, and murders,
“ as those nations where pride, ambition, and avarice, (passions which
“ the profits of commerce put in motion), hurry men on to the most
“ infamous excesses.” But these are only the suggestions of visionary theorists, who, indulging themselves in a life of solitude, and shunning the busy world, contemplate nothing but the beauties of their own Arcadian plans, and the defects of great commercial nations.

THERE are two objections to societies of men subsisting without commerce, which destroy the whole airy fabric. They can neither provide for their security, nor guard against the calamities of famine ; for it is commerce which gives strength and security to a nation, furnishing it with a maritime power ; and it is commerce which procures a supply of the necessaries of life, when they fail at home, through bad seasons,

seasons, sickness, or want of hands to cultivate the earth (from foreign ports) in exchange for the works of industry and art, fabricated in times of health and plenty. A nation without commerce is ever at the mercy of a powerful neighbour; their lives, and the necessaries of life they have produced for their subsistence, are held by a most precarious tenure; for the strong arm of an invader, or conqueror may deprive them of both, whenever ambition, or the wants of his subjects, prompts him to the enterprize.

IN short, a people, so circumstanced, could neither have fleets nor armies; for their population would not provide sufficient numbers for the purposes of defensive wars, nor would they be possessed of treasures to purchase foreign aid, or to avert, by presents, the designs of an ambitious neighbour: they could never acquire relative riches by internal trade, and, without them, they must be always weak and defenceless.

THE truth of these observations appears from the conduct of all considerable nations in the known world, which are more or less engaged in commerce. The very few of little note that subsist without it, are in a savage state, poor, miserable, and brutal, a prey to each other, or to the first potent commercial people, who, with a view of gain, land an armed force on their territories, and reduce them to slavery.

BUT if even the civilized nations on the continent, from experiencing the advantages of universal commerce, are pursuing it at present with unremitted ardour, how much more are the inhabitants of Great Britain interested to make it their chief study, to support and preserve the extensive commerce they now carry on to all quarters of the globe!

GREAT BRITAIN derives all its importance, all its influence and credit with the chief continental powers of Europe, from its commerce. Its seat of empire is an island, exposed to the attacks of any foreign enemy, capable of bringing a formidable fleet and army to invade it. We want therefore no supernatural gift to inform us, that we must always keep up a navy, so powerful, as to make us masters of the seas, or at least to enable us to guard our own coasts against all hostile

stile attempts. The defenceless state of this island, for want of its proper guardian, a marine force, is well known, before the introduction of general commerce.

THE invasions and conquests of the ROMANS, the SAXONS, and the DANES, are lasting memorials of the inconsiderable, contemptible figure this country made in the annals of the world, without commerce; and the striking contrast which the power and opulence of the the same little spot of earth now presents, by means of its mercantile resources; demonstrates, beyond a possibility of contradiction, that every principle, ancient or modern, which can contribute to the extension and security of its commercial interests, ought to be closely studied, and properly applied to practice, by all her patriotic citizens, according to their different capacities and ranks in life.

AGRICULTURE, the useful ARTS and MANUFACTURES, properly supported, encourage the multiplication of the people, and produce MERCHANDIZE; POPULATION and MERCHANDIZE support NAVIGATION; commercial NAVIGATION is the basis of a MARITIME FORCE; a MARITIME FORCE is the natural security of a kingdom, situated in an island; and if it is rendered superior in strength and valour to rival powers, will make such a kingdom more potent and formidable than the most extensive empire on the continent.

LET us now enquire on what principles universal commerce must be conducted, so as to answer the great and important purposes of supporting the power, riches, and prosperity of Great Britain and her colonies, to whose commercial interests I now mean to apply the general elements of commerce.

EXPORTATION, on the principle of BARTER, was the first operation of the commerce of the ancients; but, since the introduction of MONEY, as the medium of mercantile transactions, the idea of barter is become more confined, and disused; I shall therefore, in conformity to the style of modern commercial writers, consider exportation at large, uncombined with the literal definition of barter, as the first principle of modern commerce.

To direct this principle, and to make it operate the most beneficial effects to the community, should be the grand concern of ADMINI-

STRATION; and, in England, this important charge falls within the departments of the treasury and the board of trade, with what propriety shall be hereafter shewn.

THE superfluities of a country, whether consisting of the natural products of its domains, or of the works of art and industry, resulting from the labour and ingenuity of its inhabitants, are the proper objects of profitable exportation.

BUT the great skill of a statesman, or of the supreme directors of the commercial concerns of any nation, consists in ascertaining this superfluity. For want of due attention to this point, exportation sometimes proves highly impolitic, and the commerce founded on it extremely pernicious to the state.

THERE cannot, properly speaking, be a superfluity of any commodity, usually consumed by the inhabitants, till the average demand, *communibus annis*, is supplied, and a quantity laid up in store for home-consumption, sufficient to answer the extra-demands of the people, that may probably arise from contingent events.

THOUGH this rule should be general, with respect to all articles of home-consumption; as the cupidity of the farmer, the artist, the manufacturer, or the merchant, may often tempt individuals, for the sake of large profits, to copious exportations, highly prejudicial to the public; it is more particularly binding with regard to provisions, and the other necessaries of life. There are a number of articles in the list of the luxuries of life that we might dispense with, if too large exports should cause a scarcity; but without plenty of food and raiment, the operations of arts and manufactures will stagnate; and though commerce may flourish to appearance, by these partial exportations of the necessaries of life, for private gains, yet, in a short time after, that will likewise decline, for want of fresh supplies of real superfluities.

THE average produce and consumption should be stated for any given number of years, and these should determine the quantity necessary to be laid up in store, to provide against a calamitous scarcity. This, with respect to corn, will greatly depend on the climate, and the fertility of the soil, and therefore the estimation of the quantity constituting

tuting a superfluity must vary in different countries. What it is in England I am not able to ascertain, nor is it my business to enter into arithmetical calculations, which, on this head, are so vague and discordant, that scarce two writers agree in the quantity of arable land, the usual annual produce after a good harvest, or the amount of our yearly consumption.

It was imagined, before the scarcity in 1767, that a good year produced sufficient for three; but lately, (whether it be owing to the vast increase of pasture-lands, or to some other latent cause, I cannot determine) it appears, that we do not grow above eighteen months provision in the best years. Certain it is, that government, before that period, never had any authentic information on the subject, otherwise our farmers and corn-factors would not have been suffered to export such immense quantities to Spain and Italy in 1766, which exposed us to the mortification of being laughed at by all Europe the following year, when we were obliged to send to the markets of France and Flanders, in search of corn to feed our own people; because we had ignorantly permitted the avarice of a few to supersede the true principle of exportation, by shipping off a necessary, instead of a superfluity.

SEVERAL commercial and political authors of repute, give it as a general maxim, "That during seven years of plenty, provision should be made for seven years of scarcity;" and though they confine it to corn, yet it must equally hold good with respect to the other necessities of life.

THERE should be seven years cloathing, as well as seven years food, in store for the inhabitants, by the same rule; but, in short, whatever be the quantity necessary to guard against public distress, it is the duty of government to be well assured, that there is a superfluity beyond that stated quantity, before the ports are set open for exportation. For exportation, with a full assurance of national profit, is very distinct from private gain.

BEFORE I close this head, I must venture one remark.

IF the landholders of England are of opinion, that the wealth which universal commerce brings into the nation is the cause of the increased

value of their lands of late years, they can have but one joint interest, in common with the mercantile inhabitants, and, on that principle, they must encourage agriculture to such a degree, as to make it an object of commerce, which can never be done by increasing pasture-lands; but, if they think the home-consumption sufficient to keep up the value of their estates, it will be sufficient for their purpose to grow corn enough for the inhabitants, and never to think of exporting it again; the graziers and the horse-breeders may, in that case, form the majority of tenants all over England. But I apprehend, that as the chief food of mankind becomes dear and scarce, population will decline, the consumption of animal food will diminish, manufactures will fail, and the price of lands consequently fall. It is therefore my humble opinion, that it is the interest of the land-owners to encourage the most beneficial culture of their estates, which must certainly be, the growth of corn in such quantities, that it may again be made an article of commerce.

NAVIGATION we have already noticed as the second principle of commerce, without which the first could not possibly operate any very beneficial advantages to a nation; for the exports from one country to another by land, from the divisions of land and seas, could at best be but very limited and confined, besides being unprofitable, from the delays and expences of land-carriage.

BUT a third principle is still wanting, to unite with the first, in order to give full strength and activity to the second, and that is IMPORTATION.

A NATION cannot possibly carry on an extensive general commerce merely by exportation; for though the exports of a country should be ever so considerable, and its natural products and manufactures were to be sent to foreign countries, and sold on the most advantageous terms, only a partial benefit would arise, favouring the individuals concerned in it, but not promoting the prosperity of the state in a due proportion; because, if the returns were all made in specie, the ships that carried out our merchandize would come home light, and mercantile navigation would not be encouraged in such a manner as to prove a nursery for
Q seamen,

seamen, and to enable the state to form a maritime force for the protection of her domains, and of the commerce of her subjects; which is the case, where the two principles of exportation and importation, properly applied, unite their operations to support the employment of an immense quantity of ships and seamen.

WHEN exportation and importation are properly conducted, they are the springs which regulate all the motions of the grand machine of commerce; but if any error happens, either through ignorance, inadvertency, avarice, or venality, in the direction of either; all the movements are disordered, and the machine itself is either considerably impaired, or totally destroyed.

It is therefore my duty, in the next place, to offer to your consideration, and submit to your judgment, those mercantile maxims and regulations for the management of both, which, in the opinions of the best commercial writers, are calculated to establish and preserve a flourishing state of universal commerce.

I SHALL begin with the just maxims of exportation, because we may naturally imagine they were the first commercial adventures in every country, in the infancy of its navigation.

I. WE must export our natural products in the most improved state they will bear; this is the object of arts and manufactures.

II. IN our exportations we must not only take care that we send out the superfluities our own people can best spare, but we must pay attention to the necessities of those countries that demand our commodities. If they cannot possibly do without them, nor yet be furnished with them elsewhere, it is a commercial principle*, (not very liberal, I own) “to endeavour to sell them dear, so far forth as the high price
“cause not a less vent in the quantity. But the superfluity of our com-
“modities, which strangers use, and may also have the same from
“other nations, or may abate their vent by the use of some such like
“wares, from other places, and with little inconvenience; we must
“in this case, strive to sell as cheap as we possibly can, rather than to
“lose the utterance of such wares.”

* See Mun's English Treasure, by foreign Trade. Glasgow Edit. 1755.

III. As far as is consistent with the political freedom of commerce, we must make our exports in our own ships ; for, by this method, they will be made of threefold value to the state. First, Their intrinsic value : Secondly, The profits of freight and insurance : And, Thirdly, The multiplication of our seamen.

It is on this maxim that, in most commercial countries, the exportation of grain, and other necessities of life, and of ammunition and stores, is prohibited to strangers, or in foreign bottoms, being allowed only to natives, and in ships belonging to the country from whence the exports are made.

The British act of trade and navigation proceeds on the broad basis of this maxim, and thereby secures to the mother-country the trade of her colonies.

IV. It is our interest to give those exports the preference which are made to the most remote countries from the place where the commodities are shipped. The length of the voyage increasing the burthen of the shipping, the profit on freight, the number of mariners, and the value of the objects of such exports, so as to render the commerce more beneficial to individuals, and to the community, than any other carried on with countries nearer home.

V. Those exports will be highly advantageous, which are made to countries that supply us, in return, with the first materials for our arts and manufactures, with any necessities of life for home-consumption, or any commodities for exportation to other countries.

A TREBLE freight arises out of this kind of BARTER, which renders it more advantageous to the individuals concerned, and to the state in general, than even returns in specie, especially since remittances in paper have become so general.

PERMIT me to illustrate this maxim by a familiar instance.

I SEND a cargo of woollen goods to Flanders in an English bottom, of which you will suppose me the owner. Finding no demand in England for any commodity from Flanders, I desire my correspondent to remit me the value of my merchandize in specie; which he will

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do,

do, by bill of exchange, or ordering me to draw on him ; and here ends the commercial operation. With respect to my ship, it must either return in ballast, or time must be lost, in procuring a back-freight.

BUT let me send my cargo, instead of Flanders, to Virginia, my ship may return with tobacco, bartered for my woollen goods ; here, a second freight is immediately gained : part of the tobacco being destined for home-consumption, a duty to the state is paid on importation, to the advantage of its revenues. The remainder of the cargo I re-export to Germany ; thus, a third freight accrues : and, if I barter again in Germany, there is a probability that a fourth profit of freight will be gained by the ship, before this compound mercantile operation (which had its origin in my exportation of our manufactures) is finally completed.

VI. THE exportation of our natural products and manufactures, should be free from all duties.

VII. IF, from the particular circumstances of a nation, it be found necessary to depart from this maxim, and to impose duties outwards, on our native commodities, great care should be taken, that the business of the merchants-exporters may not suffer any delay at the custom-house, through embarrassing formalities ; the clerks should be enjoined to use their utmost diligence in dispatching outward-bound ships, and they should be severely punished for neglect upon these occasions ; for the loss of one tide is very often the overthrow of a voyage *.

VIII. IT is sometimes necessary to give bounties on our natural products, and on our manufactures, proper for exportation, as an encouragement to the cultivators, and the proprietors of manufactories, to stimulate them to such exertions of industry, as may be the means of producing the largest superfluity or overplus, beyond the quantities required for home-consumption, that so universal commerce be rendered more extensive and beneficial.

THE bounty on corn has been already mentioned, and the objections to it properly stated ; it remains only to observe, in this place, that

* See Cary on Trade. London, printed for T. Osborne, 1745.

those on British-made sail-cloth, on British manufactures of silk, and on British and Irish linens, have never been liable to any objection whatever; but, on the contrary, are generally acknowledged to have been the means of bringing those manufactures to the highest degree of perfection, and of making them articles of universal commerce; whereas, before those bounties were granted, they only furnished sufficient quantities for home-consumption.

IX. It is beneficial to export bullion and coin, as well as the natural products and manufactures of a kingdom; and it contributes to increase our treasures, instead of exhausting them, as some writers pretend.

It has been a popular error for ages, to exclaim against sending bullion and coin out of the kingdom of Great Britain; and the millions of bullion exported to India, till within these few years, was one of the heaviest complaints brought against the East India company. It is generally supposed, that money carried out of the realm creates a loss of so much treasure on the balance of trade; and also that it is a direct violation of an act of parliament made to prevent it. The example of Spain (the source of money) is brought to prove, that the exportation of it is impolitic.

BUT it is observed, on the other hand, that Venice, Florence, Genoa, and Holland, permit it, and find the greatest benefits from making it an article of commerce.

THOSE who wrote against the exportation of bullion formerly, had no conception of the vast fabric of mercantile credit, which has since been erected upon the honour and good faith of the reputable merchants of all the commercial states of Europe. They could have no idea of our extensive paper-circulation, both at home and abroad, which has quite altered the face of commercial affairs, and enabled us to export bullion and coin on advantageous terms, while an eighth part of the quantity of coin formerly required, is sufficient for the purposes of internal circulation.

AND those, who are so obstinate as to maintain at present, the theory of prohibiting the exportation of coin and bullion, know very little of
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the nature of commercial credit and paper-currency, both of which are substituted in the place of the precious metals, and have such an influence on the operations of inland trade, that they leave the merchants at full liberty to export a reasonable quantity of bullion and coin, without prejudicing the commercial interests of the state.

It is now universally known, that it is not any given quantity of the precious metals, carefully kept in a nation, and prohibited to be exported out of it, that makes such a nation the richer. The very reverse is experienced in Spain, which, with all its mines of gold and silver, is poor and feeble: whereas some free states; particularly that of Holland, by trading with money, have created treasures, and increased both the natural and relative riches of their country. The mistake lies, and a very great one it is, in supposing that the balance of trade is always to be formed by estimating the quantity of the precious metals we receive in that balance; whereas the true balance consists in the amount of our good debts abroad, and of our marketable merchandize at home, over and above what we owe to other nations.

THE ultimate balance of trade is reckoned in money; and it is by this scale that the profits of trade are usually computed. But as money itself is of no further use, but merely as a kind of instrument for the circulation of products or commodities, a very beneficial commerce may be carried on between two different nations, without any of them having any money to receive at the close of their accounts. Not only the mariners navigating the ships, but also the whole train of artificers employed in the various branches of manufactures, bred and nourished by such a commerce, innumerable brokers, &c. gain all of them a comfortable subsistence; each country is accommodated with what it wanted of the products of the other, and the merchants on all sides increase in wealth, though at last their accounts are even as to money, or yet though one pays a balance in money to the other.

“ EACH merchant is a gainer, and so is his country, if his returns, after paying all his expences of the voyage, are worth more

“ at home, or will purchase again a greater quantity of goods than he
“ had exported *.”

A BALANCE paid in money doth not necessarily infer a loss by commerce. Suppose that last year Great Britain paid a balance upon the whole of its foreign trade, of one hundred thousand pounds in specie, but that the national stock of necessaries, of valuable materials for our manufactures, of naval stores for our security, and of commodities proper to be re-exported to advantage, were augmented to double that amount; by the vulgar erroneous way of reckoning, we must have lost the last year one hundred thousand pounds by our commerce; yet it must be evident to every rational man, that we have gained, by this course of foreign exchanges, no less than one hundred thousand pounds; and it might so happen, that we could not have made this gain, without exporting bullion and coin, as well as paying a final balance in them.

For instance, if a ship is bound to a port, partly laden with corn from Great Britain, and having other merchandize on board for a different country; does it follow, if the owner or master knows that he can take in, at the port where he is to deliver his corn, double the amount in materials for the manufactures of his country, that he shall not carry out a sum of money to purchase commodities, that will prove profitable to him, and add to the valuable stock of his country.

In fine, there are but two reasonable exceptions to the exportation of coin; the one is, when so great a quantity is carried out, that there is not a sufficient currency in the nation, to be the medium of our internal exchanges at home.

It is supposed this has frequently been the case with respect to our silver coin; but it is a mistake: our silver coin is hoarded by the bank, by bankers, pay-offices, &c. as an expedient against extraordinary, unforeseen, sudden demands, that they may avoid the discredit of stopping payment, by making satisfaction in silver---an operation which gains time, and affords an opportunity for the fresh receipts of money, to balance the extra-demand.

* See Harris's Treatise on Money and Coins.

THE second exception is, when money is sent out of the kingdom, never to be returned in profitable commodities, or indeed in any. This is the case, when travellers carry it out to expend in foreign countries, which have no commerce with us; or to bestow it on countries, whose inhabitants are our natural rivals in arts and arms; thereby furnishing them with the sinews of war, and one of the resources of commerce. The law has wisely provided a remedy against this evil, by empowering the collectors of the customs, or their searchers, to seize any sums of gold coin, amounting to one hundred guineas, found in the baggage of any person about to leave the kingdom, not declared, and duly entered (by licence) as an article of commerce. But this law, like many others, is become obsolete, through indolence, and a false indulgence to persons of high rank, who go to France, Italy, and the Spa in Germany, for health or pleasure.

THESE exceptions apart, it is a true principle of commerce to export bullion and coin *; and it will be still more evident, that no disadvantage can possibly arise from it, if a due regard be paid to the last maxim of exportation I shall have occasion to mention.

X. THE riches of a commercial country will depend on its exports of native products and manufactures, and its re-exports of foreign commodities, exceeding in quantity and value, the amount of its imports for home-consumption.

BUT the calculation on this head must not be made in a partial, limited manner, which is too often the case. The exports, imports, and re-exports of no particular year must form this balance. It must be an average amount of some given number of years, which may allow time for the disposing of the excess of the imports in any one year, by

* IT is in the stock of the kingdom, as in the estates of private men, who, having store of wares, do not therefore say, they will not venture out, or trade with their money, (for this were ridiculous); but do also turn that into wares, whereby they multiply their money; and so, by a continual and orderly change of one into the other, grow rich, and, when they please, turn all their estate into treasure; for the proverb says, *he that hath wares, hath money by the year.*

Mun, Chap. iv. *On the Exportation of our Moneys, as a Means to increase our Treasure.*

re-exportation. It is a capital mistake of almost all our commercial writers, to make the balance of trade consist in the exports exceeding the imports in value. They advance this as a general, unexceptionable maxim of commerce. In treating of the real balance of commerce, I shall state my objections to this rule as a general one, and endeavour to establish a just criterion, by which a maritime, manufacturing kingdom, like Great Britain, may ascertain when the balance of universal commerce is in her favour.

XI. GREAT care should be taken, that no article of customary export should totally fall off. If it is suspended for a time, through any extraordinary cause, it is the duty of the administrators of the commercial affairs of a maritime state, to represent to the legislature the deficiency in the exports occasioned thereby, that such laws may be enacted, as will have a tendency to revive the suspended branch of commerce, especially if it has proved highly beneficial to the general interest.

ALL authorities, ancient and modern, subscribe to the rectitude of this principle :

THAT the true interest of trading nations depends upon having a vigilant eye over their exports and imports. We will, therefore, in the next place, attempt to investigate the true maxims of importation.

I. THE first objects of importation in a manufacturing country are, the raw materials to be employed in their various works of art and industry. It follows, that, in our commercial connections, we must give the preference to those nations which supply us with them in the greatest abundance, and on the most reasonable terms, even though they consume little or none of our products or manufactures, and that we are obliged to pay for them in specie.

It will be policy to grant all possible indulgencies to such countries; slight injuries must not be hastily resented; and, in fact, a sort of dependency will arise, which must subject a nation, requiring these foreign materials for her manufactures, to many inconveniencies. The great utility of raising the first materials for manufactures at home, or (if the soil will not admit of that) the expediency of planting colonies,

or of encouraging those already established to cultivate these articles, is self-evident. We shall see hereafter the importance of the British colonies to the mother country, on this consideration alone.

II. No import-duties should be laid on such articles entering the nation where they are wanted, nor should they be subject to the formalities and delays in landing them, to which other merchandize are liable; proper inspection being made, they should be discharged, landed, and expedited, with all possible dispatch, to the inland provinces where they are to be employed.

III. If such encouragement be found requisite, BOUNTIES must be given to the merchants importing such articles, to excite them to employ their capitals and their shipping, in bringing them home, in preference to other commodities.

IV. THE importations of a manufacturing country must chiefly consist of the products of other countries in their native state, or with as little labour as possible bestowed on them; that the poor labouring subjects of the nation importing them may find employment in preparing and perfecting them for the use of the manufacturers.

V. IMPORTS of manufactured, or finished commodities, should only be admitted from countries receiving from the importers a greater quantity, and more in value, of their natural products, or manufactures.

THERE is an exception to this rule, which makes it require illustration. Suppose Great Britain, at a time when its government permits the exportation of corn, should send annually to any country to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds sterling, but that the same country never demanded any of our manufactures, it would nevertheless be to our advantage to permit the importation of their manufactured commodities (not interfering with similar manufactures of our own) to very near the same amount; for a profit would be gained in the first instance on the corn exported; a second would accrue to navigation, from the employment of ships and mariners to transport it; and a third to the revenue, from the duties on importation.

BUT there are circumstances which will admit of a reversal of the
rule

rule itself; that is to say, the imports may exceed the amount of the exports, and still be beneficial to the importing nation, though the exports should consist only of natural products, (such as corn), and the imports of manufactured commodities. Suppose there is a large demand on Great Britain from a third country, (with which she carries on a profitable commerce), for the manufactured commodities you draw from the place where you send your corn; you have no limitation in such a case to set to your imports, but that which the demand dictates; you may even pay a balance in specie for the manufactured commodities, and, after all, greatly promote the commercial interest of your own country *.

VI. IMPORTS of manufactured commodities, from countries which consume your most staple commodities, should be encouraged, even tho' you have manufactures of the same articles at home, provided always, that you lay a duty of at least fifteen per cent on the imported commodity; for, if your own manufacture cannot vie with the foreign one, after it has paid this duty, the charges of freight, insurance, the merchant-importer's profit, and other incidental expences; it ought not to be encouraged; individuals may gain by it; but the establishment is a loss to the nation, and the poor labouring people may be better employed than in such undertakings.

VII. IMPORTS of manufactured commodities, from countries which do not consume any of the manufactures of the country importing them, ought to be entered only for re-exportation; but the permitting them to be imported for home-consumption, though they were to pay a duty of forty per cent, is highly impolitic, and, if you have a rival manufacture at home, it is pernicious in the extreme.

* A true measure of any particular trade, as to the profit or loss of the nation thereby, cannot be taken by the consideration of such trade in itself singly, but as it stands in reference, and is subservient to the general trade of the kingdom; for it may so fall out, that there may be some places, to which little of our English manufactures are exported, and yet the commodities we have from thence may be so necessary to the carrying on our trade in general to other countries, or some other particular trades, that without them the nation would greatly decline and decay in foreign trade.

Sir Josiah Child on Trade, London Edit. 1693.

THE universal consumption of French blond laces, by our unthinking ladies of quality, and rich citizens wives, to the detriment of our English blond manufactory, to the almost entire exclusion of Flanders thread lace ; by which means we have lost a great branch of commerce to that country, in woollen cloths and stuffs, and, finally, to the menacing our thread lace manufactories with destruction ; is a fatal, standing evidence of the truth of this maxim.

THE consumers of French manufactures in Great Britain should be considered as petty traitors, and punished severely ; for they enrich our natural rivals, who can make us no returns of the money sent out of the kingdom for this needless article of luxury, in compliance with the vitiated taste of our people, whom the dæmon of fashion tempts to injure their country in so tender a point as her commerce.

THERE are many other articles of French commodities foolishly and traiterously consumed here ; but I notice blond and black silk laces in particular, not only on account of the universality of the fashion, which makes the amount of the consumption very considerable, but because this folly has unfortunately lasted many years, and does not seem to be subject to the usual revolutions of fashions, which are frequent and sudden.

VIII. CLANDESTINE importations should be prevented by the severest laws, and by the most rigorous, diligent, indefatigable exertions of the power and strength of government, in carrying them into effectual execution ; for they are felonies in commerce of the most capital kind. I am sorry to say, that, when I recapitulate the elements of commerce, and point out wherein we adhere to, or deviate from them, I shall be obliged to demonstrate that this maxim respecting importations is not properly attended to by the directors of our commercial affairs.

IX. ALL merchandize imported solely for the purpose of re-exportation to other countries, should be enterable duty free.

A VERY great branch of the British commerce consists in re-exportations, and that chiefly of commodities imported from her own colonies, which, for obvious reasons, ought to be put upon the footing of our native

native exports. Yet the present method of transacting this business at the custom-house is tedious, perplexing, and expensive, as well as contrary to the principles of commerce which respect colonization---But of this in its proper place.

COMMODITIES designed for re-exportation are subject to duties on importation into Great Britain, and, when re-exported, either the whole, or part of the duties are returned, according to the several acts of parliament for that purpose, by a mode of operation called DRAW-BACKS, by debentures or certificates on oath, which is attended with many embarrassing circumstances, is subject to a variety of frauds and impositions on the government, is a terrible impediment to this branch of commerce with respect to the subject, and a grievance of the first magnitude.

WITH respect to the government, one third of the present number of officers, and consequently of the expences, would be sufficient to prevent all impositions in the free entry and custody of merchandize, in public warehouses belonging to the custom-house, for the purpose of re-exportation.

As to the merchants, it is a very great hardship to oblige them to make deposits in ready money to a considerable amount, for such commodities as are destined to be sent out again ; and it may often oblige them to make unprofitable, hasty re-exportations, because they want to be reimbursed by the draw-backs.

A SMALL transit duty for the use of the king's warehouses, officers, &c. is all that ought to be paid on the entrance of merchandize for re-exportation.

IN the Austrian Netherlands, it is one half per cent ; and the port of Ostend, which had lost almost all its commerce, is now rivaling that of Hamburgh, owing to this new regulation, which took place in 1766, while I resided there.

HAVING stated the general maxims of exportation and importation, which are the vitals of commerce, it will be proper, in the next place, to resume, and thoroughly to discuss a subject, which has greatly divided our commercial writers, and on which the most intelligent merchants differ in opinion.

I HAVE already hinted, that incorporated mercantile companies, enjoying charters, (which guaranty to them certain rights and privileges, to the exclusion of the other subjects of a state, not members of these commercial societies), are establishments founded on true commercial principles ; and I promised to maintain this argument against all the objections that have been urged against them. I will now endeavour to discharge this obligation with honour.

ON.

ON PUBLIC COMMERCIAL COMPANIES.

THE grand question before us, for our deliberate consideration, and final judgment, is, Whether the immediate prosperity, and future security of universal commerce is best provided for by the establishment of public companies, (enjoying the sanction of government, and peculiar privileges, but subject, at the same time, to political restrictions), or by granting a free and unlimited licence of commerce to every individual of a state, who conforms himself to its commercial laws and customs?

I HAVE endeavoured to state this question with all possible precision, and yet, I hope, I have done it in such clear and ample terms, that there can be no room left to charge me with any omission. If any gentleman thinks he can amend it, he will do me great honour to propose his alterations before I proceed *.

It is necessary to be very delicate, when we have the unpopular side of a question to defend, and are combating against the prejudices and passions of mankind, especially when these prejudices and passions are countenanced and strengthened by very great authorities. Such is the present case-- Several authors of repute oppose my sentiments, and their writings are the basis of the opinions of the speculative theorists of the present times: many of these are members of parliament, and respectable merchants; and we

* THE majority of my readers will be pleased to pardon the personal addresses occasionally introduced into this work, when they recollect, that a sketch of it was delivered in public lectures: a pause being made, and no gentleman proposing any amendment, the question was discussed as it now stands.

may all remember the eloquent speeches that were made in the house of commons against chartered companies, when the affairs of the East India company were before that house, in the years 1767 and 1768. The substance of the objections to such limitations of commerce, I shall lay before you, and I flatter myself I shall answer them to your satisfaction.

COMPANY, in commerce, is defined to be, an association of several merchants, and others, who unite in one common interest, and contribute by their stock, their counsel, and their study, to the setting on foot, or supporting, some lucrative establishment. There is also another sort of mercantile associations, called companies, who trade not upon a joint stock, but only enter into a legal contract to carry on particular branches of commerce, under certain regulations.

THE commerce of Great Britain is carried on partly by companies of the two kinds just mentioned, and partly by private merchants.

FORMERLY we reckoned nine public commercial companies in England: viz. the Hamburgh, Russia, Eastland, Turkey, East-India, Royal African, Canary, Hudson's Bay, and South Sea. I place them in the order of their several foundations.

OF all these companies only three remain of any note, which carry on their commerce by joint stock, and enjoy exclusive privileges under charters confirmed by act of parliament; these are the Hudson's Bay, the East India and South Sea companies. With respect to the others, the trade of some of them is thrown open to all the subjects of Great Britain, and any person may be admitted a member of the rest, by paying a very small fine, and agreeing to submit to their respective bye-laws or regulations. I may therefore take the liberty to draw the question into a narrower compass, by applying the general objections against all exclusive rights and privileges to the two capital companies now actually enjoying such rights and privileges in Great Britain.

THE earliest, and indeed the most respectable advocate for unlimited commerce, in opposition to companies, is Sir Josiah Child, whose arguments I shall give in his own words.

“ ALL restrictions of trade are naught; and consequently no company

“ pany whatsoever, whether they trade in a joint stock; or under regulation, can be for public good, except it may be easy for all, or any of his majesty’s subjects, to be admitted into all, or any of the said companies, at any time, for a very inconsiderable fine; and if the fine exceed twenty pounds, it is too much, and that for these reasons.

“ BECAUSE the Dutch, who thrive best by trade, and have the surest rules to thrive by, admit not only any of their own people, but even Jews, and all kinds of aliens, to be free of any of their societies of merchants, or any of their cities or towns corporate.

“ NOTHING in the world can enable us to cope with our rivals, the Dutch, (we will here substitute the French in the place of the Dutch) in any trade, but increase of hands and stock, which a general admission will do; many hands and much stock being as necessary to the prosperity of any trade, as men and money to warfare.

“ THERE is no pretence of any good to the nation by companies, but only order and regulation of trade; and if that be preserved, (which the admission of all that will come in, and submit to the regulation, will not prejudice) all the good to the nation that can be hoped for by companies, will be obtained.”

He then instances the disadvantages our east country, and Russia trade laboured under in his time, from the management of their respective companies in England, whereby our trade to these countries was in effect wholly lost, while the Dutch, without companies, increased theirs to above forty times the amount of ours: from whence, he says, may be inferred,

“ I. THAT restrained, limited companies are not alone sufficient to preserve and increase a trade.

“ II. THAT limited companies, though established by act of parliament, may lose a trade.

“ III. THAT trade may be carried on to any part of Christendom, and increased, without companies.

“ IV. THAT we have declined more, at least have increased less,

“ in those trades limited to companies, than in others, where all his
 “ majesty's subjects have had equal freedom to trade *”

It is to be observed, that Sir Josiah Child's arguments are extended to private companies, and to corporation privileges, proving them equally detrimental to inland trade, as public companies to commerce; and indeed every objection to the one, is equally conclusive to the others, and proceeds upon the very same principle, “ that of allowing
 “ free and unlimited licence to trade, both at home and abroad, to all
 “ the subjects of a free state.”

MR. CARY, in his discourse on trade, particularly finds fault with the India company, as a pernicious establishment; because, in his time, they exported our bullion, and very little of our natural products or manufactures, while they brought home great quantities of commodities perfectly manufactured, which hindered the consumption of our own, and discouraged the wearing of such as were purchased with them †. But the state of our India company's affairs is quite altered of late years; and we shall make it appear, before we quit this subject, that our commerce to the East Indies, on its present footing, is one of the chief sources of the power and commercial prosperity of Great Britain.

It is indeed greatly to be lamented, that our most celebrated commercial writers have employed their pens principally in describing the state of trade in their time, in pointing out defects in its administration, and in proposing remedies suited to the situation and circumstances of the kingdom when they wrote, instead of giving us the general, invariable elements of commerce, and illustrating maxims, which no change of time, or alterations in the state of trade, can invalidate. This is what renders most of them in a great measure useless.

Thus, when Mr. Cary complained of the East India company, they exported very little of our manufactures; whereas, at present, they

* See Sir Josiah Child's Discourse on Trade, Chap. iii. *Concerning Companies of Merchants.*

† Cary on Trade, Edit. 1745.

send out a considerable quantity, consisting of a variety of articles. In short, a kind of revolution, highly advantageous to Great Britain, has taken place within the last twenty years, in several branches of commerce, which makes their different plans and states of her commerce with the four quarters of the globe erroneous, and all their theories founded thereon quite obsolete.

Two thirds of the treatises on trade by Sir Josiah Child, Mr. Cary, Mr. De Foe, Mr. Gee, and others, are filled with details of the exports and imports of England, and balances of trade in their days; and though the editor of a late edition of Gee has taken some pains to elucidate the present state of our commerce with Portugal, he has left most of the erroneous accounts of the commerce with other countries, as he found them.

THE present work being intended to communicate the true elements of commerce, I shall only, in a summary way, notice, in its proper place, the present situation of those branches of commerce which are founded on true principles, knowing how subject mercantile affairs are to great alterations; and, I hope, the general and permanent principles it contains, will make it more valuable to posterity, than any preceding treatise on the commercial art.

THE alterations in our commercial connections destroy many of the objections to the existence of our present chartered companies, which induced me to make this little digression with respect to former writers. But authors, of a more modern date, and gentlemen of repute and skill in mercantile affairs now living, who reason from the present state of commerce, advance other arguments, which require a solid refutation.

SEVERAL essays have been printed, from the year 1750, to the present time, in which it is laid down, as an incontestible truth,

“ THAT all monopolies and exclusive charters are contrary to the true interests of a commercial state, and ought to be suppressed.”

THE Turkey, South Sea, and India companies, are stiled MONOPOLIES, and each of them is more particularly attacked in these pamphlets, as the authors considered them to be more or less pernicious to the

commonwealth. In one, called *An Essay on the Causes of the Decline of our foreign Trade* *, it is said, “ That every company that has an
 “ exclusive charter, prevents the increase of the sale of our manufac-
 “ tures abroad ;” and he attempts to prove this by the conduct of the
 East India company. “ It is not the interest of the East India com-
 “ pany to increase the quantity of woollens they export, but rather to
 “ contract them, (which, I suppose, was the reason for obliging
 “ them, by their charter, to export woollen to a certain amount) ;
 “ for at all markets, where there are any demands for goods, the
 “ smallness of the quantities naturally enhances the price ; and if the
 “ company can gain as much on the sale of five thousand cloths, as
 “ on the sale of ten thousand, is it not their interest to prefer the lesser
 “ quantity, on account of the less disbursement and risk ? though it
 “ is plain the nation would lose the sale of one half of the manufac-
 “ tures capable of being vended ; whereas private traders, pushing
 “ against one another, study to increase the vent of their goods, by
 “ selling at moderate profits, making the quantities answer to them-
 “ selves and their country.”

AN objection of another nature is stated in the same essay. “ The
 “ large charges the East India and South Sea companies are forced to
 “ be at, for the salaries of directors, governors, supercargoes, &c.
 “ make these companies neglect all trades that will not yield extraor-
 “ dinary profits, which trades private merchants would be glad of,
 “ and would turn to good account for themselves and their country.”

ANOTHER writer (Captain Dobbs) says, “ The company avoid, all
 “ they can, making discoveries to the northward of CHURCHILL, or
 “ extending their trade that way, for fear they should discover a passage
 “ to the western ocean of America, and tempt, by that means, the
 “ rest of the English merchants to lay open their trade, (which they
 “ know they have no legal right to) ; and which, if the passage was
 “ found, would not only animate the rest of the merchants to pursue
 “ the trade through that passage, but also to find out the great advan-

* London, printed for Brotherton, 1750.

“ tages that might be made of the trade of the rivers and countries
 “ adjoining to the bay ; by which means they would lose their beloved
 “ monopoly.”

IT would be equally fruitless and tedious to cite passages from all the anonymous writings that have appeared in our news-papers against exclusive charters ; or attacking the East India company in particular ; for that alone can furnish matter of envy and discontent. I shall, therefore, only observe, that, in most of them, it has been asserted, that the balance of trade is against us, with respect to the East India company ; because we import from the East Indies more than we export.

BUT the most popular argument against chartered companies, which has been advanced with much patriotic zeal and eloquence in parliament, is, “ That they are incompatible with the free constitution of this country, and are direct violations of the rights and privileges of every subject of Great Britain, excluded by them from the benefits of any branch of commerce.” We have been told, that every individual in a free state is entitled to employ his industry and abilities in the manner he judges most conducive to his welfare, provided he does not injure his neighbour, nor transgress the laws of the land.

HE should therefore be at liberty to pursue the benefits of trade, wherever he can find them, and not be restrained from exporting to any part of the world, or importing into his own country, all such commodities as are allowed, by the general trading laws of the nation, to be the objects of such commerce.

I HAVE not been able, in the course of my reading and observation, to trace any more objections to limited companies, than those I have now stated ; if any have escaped me, I think, I may safely say, they are of so little consequence, as not to deserve our notice. I shall, therefore, in the next place, endeavour to obviate them, and to shew that our present exclusive companies subsist on the true principles of commerce, are highly beneficial to the trading interest of the community, and do not infringe on the native rights and privileges of individuals.

SIR JOSIAH CHILD admits, that order and regulation in trade is a
 benefit

benefit to the nation, and best preserved in companies; but we may enlarge this idea, and fairly conclude, that it was the necessity of putting commerce under certain rules and regulations, not so advantageous to individuals, but more equitable and beneficial to the commonwealth, which gave rise to public trading companies in the free states of Europe, and particularly in that of Great Britain.

It is well known, that the great object of all trade, whether conducted by individuals or companies, is GAIN. But individuals are more apt to pursue it through indirect means, than public companies, which are subject to the political restraints of government. Private persons, being under no regulations, but those of the general laws of commerce, which prohibit the exportation or importation of particular articles, may, for a long time, carry on a traffic highly profitable to themselves, but extremely prejudicial to their country, without violating those general laws; for, as we have observed in another place, the cupidity of the farmer, the merchant, or the factor, may tempt them to make copious exportations of any article, contrary to the interest of the nation. This was evidently the case with respect to the exportation of corn, at the time of laying on the embargo. Had this branch been in the hands of a public company, it could not well have happened; for the contending interests in such companies, their open assemblies, their public debates, and their situation with respect to parliament, (many of their associates being likewise members of parliament), all combine to give government an opportunity of inspecting into, and controuling the administration of their affairs, when they are found to be carrying on any branch of commerce detrimental to the nation. It is exactly the same with regard to imports: private individuals may find it very advantageous to import useless articles of foreign luxury, extremely hurtful to their country; and, while a fortune is to be made more rapidly by such exports and imports, than by those which serve the nation's interest, more than that of the private subject, they will pay the greatest attention to such branches of commerce, in preference to all others.

COMPETITION, or rivalry, between private adventurers, has often
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proved the bane of particular branches of commerce; but when it subsists between the public company of one nation, and that of another, its rival in arms, arts, and commerce, it generally proves highly beneficial to that nation, whose commercial affairs are conducted by their company, with the most skill and integrity.

THE intrigues and cabals of private inland traders; the stratagems and unfair practices they make use of to undermine each other; the frequent failures, which are the consequences of these base transactions, demonstrate but too evidently, that the lust of gain, left to itself, will obliterate all sentiments of humanity, and every obligation to civil society. The same cause will produce the same effects in general commerce; and I will venture to affirm, that there cannot be a more destructive measure proposed, with respect to any one branch of commerce, than to suffer private British subjects to carry it on, without any limitations or restrictions (except the custom-house laws) from government. Instead of rivaling foreigners, the competitors of their country, they would supplant each other; and, if an extraordinary profit were to accrue from it, perhaps purchase the manufactures of rival nations, and send them to foreign markets, under the denomination of British. A felony in commerce of this nature has been committed in London, yet the culprit survives, is caressed amongst our great men, and cannot be punished by our laws*. A public company could not have been guilty of such a capital crime against the woollen manufactures of their country; the very proposition from any of their members must have been received with horror, and rejected with indignation. But suppose it otherwise, and that a corrupt majority could be capable of accepting such a proposal, or any other equally injurious to the national welfare, and of carrying it by their votes, at a general assembly of the company; the minority (some of whom must be either members of parliament, or respectable merchants, having

* One of the most considerable merchants of London, who has since failed, and retired from business, was publicly charged, not many years since, with buying up French woollen cloths, and exporting them, as British made, to Turkey; by which, it is said, we have lost most of our commerce in that article to the Levant.

weight and influence with government), would undoubtedly represent the traiterous measure in its proper light, and an act of the legislature, or even of the king and council, if the parliament were not sitting, might instantly prevent its being carried into execution. No such opportunity is given by private adventurers. Transactions of the most impolitic nature in commerce may pass unnoticed for many years, if the private adventurers conduct their negotiations with secrecy and dexterity. In fact, I find, by examining the most ancient records of commerce, that public companies were founded in every commercial state, amongst other salutary reasons, to preserve peace between fellow-subjects, and to prevent clandestine frauds and violences committed by merchants and traders, in order to undermine each other, which menaced, in the end, the ruin of the commerce of the countries where they had happened.

BUT if it is expedient to establish public trading companies, every subject in a free state, it is said, should be admissible to be a member on paying a small fine, and submitting to its laws and regulations. To this I reply, that the fine, or consideration for admission, ought to vary, according to the nature of the company, the system of its constitution, and the importance of its commercial transactions. A fine of twenty pounds may be more than sufficient to entitle a person to become a member of a company, which does not carry on their trade by joint stock; where the members cannot lay claim to any share of the profits made by the company, but only incorporate themselves, in order to carry on their commerce to particular countries, under the protection of, and subject to certain laws and regulations agreed to by the company, and legalized by the state, for the greater security and convenience of such particular branch of foreign trade. Yet, certainly, no one will pretend, that a small consideration ought to entitle a man to become a member of a capital commercial company, trading on a joint stock, and where the profits, which may be very great, are to be divided amongst all the members: besides, the rights of debating and voting, derived from the freedom of the British constitution, make part of the immunities enjoyed by every member in our public companies;

companies; and is it reasonable or equitable, that any number of members, received into a company for small considerations, should be enabled, from selfish or partial motives, to influence others by eloquent speeches, or by their own votes, to form a majority in favour of partial or pernicious measures, which may diminish the profits, lessen the value of the capital, or otherwise injure the whole society, and counteract the more salutary designs of other members, who have subscribed large capitals to the common joint stock of the company, or have afterwards purchased large shares in it with great sums of money? Should members admitted for a small consideration be thus impowered to undermine the plans of the directors, who are generally elected to that office, on account of their long experience, great skill, and capital interest in the general concerns of the company? Every sensible man will most assuredly put a negative on these questions.

I VERY readily own, that there ought not to be an express exclusion of any subject of a free state from its public companies; but, on the other hand, the pecuniary consideration for admission ought to be regulated by the constitution and circumstances of the company; which may make one thousand pounds as small a fine to one company, in proportion to the advantages of becoming a member, as five shillings to another, from which little or none are to be expected. And I humbly apprehend, that what I have advanced on this subject is sufficient to take off the limitation prescribed by Sir Josiah Child; and to shew that the fine for admitting subjects generally, to be members of some public companies, may exceed fifty times the sum he proposes, and not be too much.

THAT restrained limited companies are not alone sufficient to preserve and increase trade, and that such companies may lose a trade, though they are established by act of parliament, cannot be denied; for, in the first place, a company may have a very flourishing commerce, but not being supported by a formidable maritime force from the state, it may want security, and, from that cause decline; and secondly, its affairs may be mismanaged, though the wisest regulations were made by parliament at its institution; but abuses in the administration of the

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concerns of any body politic or corporate, are not to be brought as arguments against the establishments themselves: private adventurers may equally lose a trade by misconduct. These two objections therefore seem to have but little weight.

BUT I totally deny the next proposition, that trade can be carried on, and increased, without companies. The confined idea of limiting it to any part of Christendom must be thrown out of the question. We must consider it at large, and then, I think, we shall make it appear, that no considerable commerce to any part of the globe can be carried on (to national advantage), or increased, without companies. It must likewise be allowed, that the first establishment of such a commerce, undertaken by the king, or by the government of a free state, would be more alarming on the score of public liberty, and liable to more objections, than the granting a charter for that purpose to a certain number of subjects.

LET us now suppose, that the foundation of a most beneficial and extensive commerce, with the inhabitants of a powerful, warlike, savage people, possessing immense tracts of land, in some very remote region, and having the dominion of the seas in those parts, is proposed to be laid by the people of Great Britain; I know but of three plans that could be proposed for carrying the design into execution. Either it must be undertaken by the sovereign; or by an association of wealthy subjects, to whom certain privileges and immunities must be granted, in consideration of the hazard they run, in advancing the whole, or a large part of their property in the adventure; or all the inhabitants must be invited to engage in it, and be stimulated to exert themselves to the best of their respective abilities, by the allurements of gain, and a full assurance from government, that the trade shall be open and free to all adventurers, and subject to no restrictions but the general commercial laws of the kingdom; a general promise of protection would likewise issue of course from the crown.

To the first plan, the subjects of Britain would never submit; they would consider any capital branch of commerce in the hands of government as a grievance of the first magnitude, and a prelude to slavery.

To the second, none but men who are influenced by selfish motives, misguided by weak judgments, or blinded by prejudices or passions, could start any objection of such force, as to make it more eligible either to lay aside the design, or to take it up on the footing of the third plan.

LARGE capitals in merchandize proper for the undertaking, or in specie to purchase them, must be the basis of new commercial connections with foreign countries, if they are intended to be very considerable, beneficial, and extensive.

MERCANTILE credit, to a latitude, the bounds of which can hardly be prescribed, is as essentially necessary for the success of such an enterprize, even at its commencement, and much more so when it has gained a footing.

A NAVAL and military force, proportioned to the nature of the undertaking, will likewise be requisite to act defensively in support of the adventurers, if not offensively. And here, with reluctance, I am obliged to observe, that COMMERCE is but too often considered (even by civilized nations) "as a political necessity, which has no law;" for it pays no respect to the laws of nature or of nations, when its interests are to be established or preserved. If savage nations, who were ignorant of commerce, till they were visited by the Europeans, cannot conceive it to be to their advantage to open a trade, to commence a free intercourse with, and to permit a set of strangers to settle amongst them; or, if they are already engaged in traffic, and politically connected with other Europeans (the foes and rivals of these strangers) should they oppose the projected scheme, they will probably be taught to change their opinions by those fatal preceptors, the sword and the musket.

By an impartial inquiry into the means of establishing an extensive commerce with any distant country on these principles, we shall discover further motives for incorporating public companies, and shall make it needless to consider the third plan proposed, because it will be found impracticable, regard being had to the situation and political circumstances of Great Britain.

THE exportation of our manufactures must be the first object of all considerable commercial establishments, (and I mean to apply my arguments only to such); the very idea, therefore, of a large capital, sufficient to purchase the great quantities of manufactures to be exported, supposes an association of a number of opulent men for that purpose: but importation of valuable commodities, for the use of our manufactures, or for home-consumption, might be a secondary object: and, lest the first should not succeed to the height of expectation, a capital in specie must be provided, to insure the success of the second, that the expedition might answer on the whole. Again, it might happen, that the number of persons associated to carry on the new establishment could not furnish a capital so large as should be judged requisite to answer these views; or, on the spot, they might find it advantageous to purchase a quantity of commodities for importation, exceeding the amount of their bartered stock and their fund in money: in either of these cases, we must see the necessity of mercantile credit; and the consideration both of the magnitude of the capital, and of the requisite extent of mercantile credit, naturally suggests to us the obvious necessity of forming a commercial association, or company, to facilitate the design, and to secure the property of each individual adventurer.

CAN it be imagined, that any set of men would meet together, and agree to deposit, some ten, and others twenty thousand pounds, to open a new and extensive commercial intercourse with the inhabitants of Asia, without fixing on certain rules of conduct, and certain means of securing their property in each other's hands? or is it likely that they should acquire that universal mercantile credit at home as individuals, which they might reasonably expect when associated and formed into one body, the whole being answerable for the debts of every individual contracted in the company's name?

COULD any other method be devised in such a case, so secure, so permanent, or so creditable, in the eyes of their fellow-subjects, as to get their regulations, agreed upon amongst themselves, converted into laws; either by a charter, or by an act of parliament?

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Is it reasonable, that any set of men, thus adventuring large fortunes, and perhaps their persons, in an enterprize, which, while it promised gain to themselves, should likewise furnish immediate employment to a number of mechanics, manufacturers, tradesmen, and mariners, and, in the end, increase the wealth of the nation, should not be intitled to some particular rights and privileges not accorded to all their fellow-subjects, particularly such as might prevent others from reaping the fruit of their enterprize? or is it probable, that they would obtain universal credit, if their fellow-subjects did not consider such exclusive rights and privileges, as the best means of insuring success?

IN whatever point of view I consider the first settlement of a grand commercial enterprize, it seems impracticable, without the concurrence of a number of wealthy citizens associated together, submitting to binding obligations, which establish confidence; making one common stock for the benefit of the company, and enjoying certain exclusive rights and privileges, as a security and a recompence for the hazard and disbursements of the undertaking. I shall therefore make no scruple to maintain, that Sir Josiah Child, and others, who have asserted, that commerce might be carried on to any part of the world without companies, meant to apply this maxim only to such trades as were actually established, without recurring to the origin of any commercial institution. Indeed, from what immediately follows, it is plain, that Child drew his inferences from the situation of some branches of commerce, which, in his time, had declined under the administration of companies. "The east country and Russia trade had been almost
"lost, by the mismanagement of their respective companies;" but this is no argument to prove that they are not necessary to establish new commercial foundations. Nor do any of the complainants against exclusive companies propose any method to open and settle fresh commercial intercourses with foreign nations, independent of companies. The argument respecting the Dutch, stands exactly upon the same footing; for though their inland trade, and some branches of their general commerce, are thrown open to all the inhabitants of the United Provinces, yet it is well known, that their principal mercantile establishments

establishments in foreign countries owe their origin (like the British) to companies. Indeed nothing is so vague as the idea of a new settlement of any kind, without an association, a charter, or an act of parliament, granting and securing certain rights and privileges to the settlers. Commercial views gave rise to the establishment of our colonies, and they had charters from the beginning, which were granted to companies; such were the North Virginia, London, and Plymouth New England companies, &c. all which I only mention to prove, that such were always the jarring interests and the strong prejudices of mankind, that no great undertaking could ever be set on foot, without uniting a certain number in a body, and binding them down to certain regulations; and as to commercial enterprizes, it is as apparent, that men could never be engaged to risk their lives and fortunes, without a security that they should reap the fruits of their adventures; and this security consists in granting them exclusive rights and privileges.

BUT such exclusive rights are seldom granted in perpetuity by the British crown or government; they are generally for a long term of years; those who are against all chartered companies availing themselves of the reserved power in the crown to resume them, insist on the expediency, equity, and sound policy of cancelling them, and of laying the branches of commerce, monopolized in virtue of such charters, open to all the subjects of the realm, after the expiration of the term of years for which they were granted. It is said, that the commerce set on foot by means of such encouragements being firmly established, and the first adventurers having received the most ample indemnification and recompence for the capitals they employed, and the hazard of the enterprize; the public, for whose benefit they were ultimately intended, should be at full liberty to embark on the same bottom, and to share the future profits of the plan. For my own part, though a warm advocate for the civil and religious freedom of all my countrymen, I cannot think this claim well founded; for it is just the same, as if we were to pretend to the right of purchasing an improved estate, consisting of the best cultivated lands, on the same terms as if it consisted only
of

of a barren, uncultivated desert. I can see no reason why a chartered company, which has raised, improved, and perhaps carried to the highest degree of perfection, a most valuable branch of commerce, equally beneficial to a number of individuals and to the state, should not continue to enjoy its ancient privileges, as the means of continuing the flourishing situation of their commerce, and of enriching their country. But if they have suffered the branch of commerce they undertook to decline, and either through the ignorance, indolence, or avarice of its managers, the company is on the point of losing it, it is then the duty of government to interpose, to take away privileges which they do not merit, and to invite all its subjects to trade to that part of the world on a free, unlimited footing.

THIS experiment has been tried; but, as a further proof of the utility of chartered companies, let it be remembered, that it has never answered. No branch of commerce (at least to my knowledge) that was in a declining state in the hands of a company, has been revived and improved by private adventurers. On the contrary, the very reverse has happened in England; which is a full refutation of Sir Josiah Child's fourth inference.

OUR East India, and Bank companies*, have brought the commerce and mercantile credit of Great Britain to such a degree of perfection, as no age or country can equal; and to suppose that this national success could have been accomplished by private merchants, or even by companies not trading on a joint stock, is an absurdity that does not deserve serious consideration.

FOR what purpose then should so great a revolution take place, as the dissolution of these companies? For none surely, but to gratify the private views of selfish individuals, who would never desire any branch

* IT may surprize many persons to find the Bank described as a chartered commercial company; but if we reflect a moment, on the support given to commerce, by their discounting bills of exchange, purchasing bullion and foreign coin; and issuing current notes, which facilitate the transport of personal property, and promote the general circulation of wealth in the nation; we must admit that it has all the properties of an exclusive trading company, though its commodities are chiefly money.

of commerce to be laid open to them, if they saw it in a declining state in the hands of a company; yet it is in such cases only that it ought to be laid open; and, were men influenced as they pretend, by the public good, it would be under such circumstances that they would petition for a free trade.

Is it probable that any private adventurers should ever have it in their power, or should so accord in opinion, having the ability, as to lend the capital sums of money to the nation, from time to time, at low interest, which have been advanced by our India, South-sea, and Bank companies, whereby the extraordinary exigencies of the state in time of war have been supplied, without levying sudden and heavy contributions on the people? But this subject more properly belongs to the Elements of Finances; I therefore only introduce it in this place, as another great national benefit derived from our present great chartered companies, so idly and vulgarly stiled monopolies.

BUT two more charges are brought against the East India company. "They do not increase the quantity of woollens they export, but rather confine themselves to the quantity stipulated by their charter." In reply to this, let it be observed, that we have other branches of commerce, in which our exports in woollen manufactures are greatly augmented; and, if it was not practicable to increase them to India, we have no reason to complain of the India company; since they have made ample amends, by opening new sources of commerce; by furnishing us with articles for re-exportation to other countries, chiefly in our own bottoms, whereby our navigation is increased, as well as a commercial intercourse with nations which formerly took no India products from England. The balance of our India commerce is, by these means, considerably in our favour, though our imports exceed our exports to that country. It is pretended likewise, "that they avoid making discoveries, or extending their trade to the northward of Churchill." My answer is, why should they employ their ships and seamen in attempts equally dangerous and uncertain, while they have full employment for them, which is alike beneficial to the company and to the nation? In short, every objection to such companies,

companies, tried by the true principles of commerce, falls to the ground. As to complaints of misconduct in the administration of the company's concerns, these ought to be adjusted amongst themselves, if they do not affect the general interest which the nation has in the prosperity of the company; when they do, we find government interposes.

THE popular argument against all monopolies is of a political nature, and is the last we have to encounter. It must be considered at large, because it equally affects all limitations and restrictions in the operations of domestic trade; for, if chartered companies, enjoying exclusive privileges, are monopolies, so likewise are all corporations, and every obstruction which prevents any subject from exercising fully his trade or art, in any part of the dominions of Great Britain. "City and corporation charters," says the author of the Essay on the Causes of the Decline of our foreign Trade, "are injurious monopolies. Where freemen exclude by charter any of the same trade from settling in their towns, have they not a monopoly against the rest of the inhabitants? Cannot they impose extravagant prices for their goods on their customers; and do they not do it? If a journeyman, not being a freeman, gets into work in a city or town-corporate, what an outcry is there not made of a foreigner being come in among them, to eat the bread out of their mouths? How! can a free-born Briton be reckoned a foreigner in any part of his own country? What an absurdity is here! yet nevertheless it is true in effect."

WE see plainly, by this author's reasoning, that the same pretence is set up for dissolving all corporations, and all private livery companies, as for annulling the charters of our public commercial companies. Individuals, born long after these have been established and brought to perfection, want to enjoy all the advantages of the institutions, without having run any hazard, or put themselves to any extraordinary expences, to entitle them to their profits. And, with the same justice, every workman, or tradesman, who thinks proper to supplant a denizen in any corporate town, is to enjoy the same privileges as the denizen himself, who has paid a valuable consideration, and submitted to seven

years servitude to acquire them. The corporation likewise, as a body, may have imposed fines on their members for public buildings, for navigable canals, for quays, and a variety of other conveniencies to carry on their trade; yet an extravagant, idle fellow, who could not succeed in any particular town, or perhaps has fled from it for debt, is to come and settle amongst the denizens of another corporate town, and enjoy all the rights, immunities, and conveniencies, which they and their ancestors have purchased or acquired by painful servitude; and on the sole plea, that they are free-born Britons. But let us suppose that these advocates for the general freedom of trade could carry their point, must it not be obvious to the meanest capacity, that arts, manufactures, and trade would be thrown into the utmost confusion and disorder? Whenever higher wages, a larger demand for goods, or more beneficial employment offered, workmen and tradesmen would leave the places of their nativity, and a general circulating migration would take place; so that no master could be sure of his servant in any manufactory or shop for six months together, nor any landlord of his tenant, if a trader. Besides, it is not considered, that the honours of magistracy vested in corporations is a spur to emulative industry, and these are founded on constant long residence on one spot. In short, the train of evils, which would arise from adopting the false maxim of permitting every individual to employ his industry and abilities in the manner he judges most conducive to his welfare, and to pursue the benefits of trade wherever he can find them, are innumerable; and the only rational answer we can give to such idle claims is, that they are inconsistent with the public good, and cannot be admitted in civilized states.

PRETENSIONS of this nature mean to give the same latitude with respect to commerce, as natural liberty assumes, when opposed to civil liberty, politically considered.

BUT let it be remembered, that, as the man who submits to the laws of civil society, sacrifices, for the public good, part of his natural liberty; so, in commerce, it is apparent, that the natural freedom of trade, claimed by individuals, must give way to the security, convenience,

nience, and advantage of the great mercantile society of which he is a member.

ON the principle of a free, open, unlimited exercise of trade, domestic and foreign, all public companies, enjoying exclusive privileges, and all incorporated towns and cities, as well as every restrictive subordination in trade, must fall to the ground; but I imagine the experience of ages, the present flourishing situation of our inland trade, and universal commerce, under these several limitations, and the arguments I have advanced in their favour, will be sufficient to convince the unprejudiced, that public commercial companies and corporations are beneficial, equitable, honourable, and compatible with the freedom of the British constitution.

BUT who would believe, that we have authors of repute, who have contested another principle of commerce? "the establishment of colonies:" yet such there are, and therefore it is my duty to obviate all objections on that head.

ON COLONIES.

I HAVE shewn in a former part of this treatise, that planting colonies is a true principle of commerce ; that it was carried into execution by the ancient commercial states, and was adopted with success by England in the reign of queen Elizabeth. I mentioned, that the encouragement given by that wise princess to colonization, was the basis of the present power, extensive commerce, and unrivaled navigation of Great Britain.

BUT, in this place, I mean to shew that they are an inexhaustible fund of riches and strength to the British isles, and that (from a little kingdom, of renown only for valour and freedom in former times) they have enlarged and consolidated them into a mighty empire.

“ THE domination of Britain is, at this period, extended over
 “ countries so very considerable and important, that it properly merits
 “ the name of empire ; for, exclusive of her own domestic dominions,
 “ and of her many detached possessions in the different quarters of the
 “ globe, her territory on the continent of America is itself equal to a
 “ powerful state*.”

THE French writers unanimously agree, that our naval and commercial superiority is principally derived from our colonies. The author of the Comparison between the two kingdoms acknowledges, that, in this respect, the two nations are unequal ; for the English

* See The Importance of the British Dominions in India, compared with that in America, London, printed for J. Almon, 1770.

settlements, he says, are of greater importance than those of France, and form indeed the chief pillar of England's greatness.

YET notwithstanding these, and numerous other concurrent testimonies, in support of our principle, and the successful application of it by the British legislature; early and warm oppositions to it were set on foot soon after our first settlements were made in America; and, notwithstanding we have, with our usual national spirit and industry, improved in our practice upon this ancient principle of commerce, it is found fault with to this very hour from the press, and in the senate. Indeed the contest was carried so far, that, in 1766, administration itself caught the infection, and adopted a scheme of unnatural oppression, which, had it been enforced in the manner it was purposed, must have diminished the commerce, and consequently the strength and power of Great Britain; for these colonies, instead of producing almost every thing we want for our manufactures, would have turned their attention to manufacturing for themselves, and, from a variety of circumstances in their favour, would have been enabled not only to prejudice the sale of those of their mother-country, but, in the end, to have rivalled us in them at foreign markets.

THE principal argument of any weight against colonization is stated by Child, and after him by Cary. "Gentlemen of no mean capacities, amongst whom were Sir William Petty, were of opinion, in king William's reign, that the New England settlers should be invited to return home; because home population was considered as the true national object, and the depopulation of the kingdom by emigrations to America was reckoned very prejudicial." Cary takes notice, "That it has been a great question among many thoughtful men, whether the settling our plantations abroad has been an advantage to the nation? The reasons they give against them are, that they have drained us of multitudes of our people, who might have been serviceable at home, and advanced improvement in husbandry and manufactures; that this kingdom is worse peopled, by so much as they are increased; and that inhabitants being the wealth of a nation, by how much they are lessened, by so much we are

“ are the poorer than when we first began to settle those colonies.” To these complainants of former times, we may add some writers in the present, who declare, that, with regard to North America, we have been colonizing mad, the quick peopling of that continent having been made too much our object; and, in the late unhappy divisions between some of these colonies and the mother-country, many gentlemen in parliament went so far as to wish them at the bottom of the sea, or in the hands of any other power, France excepted.

It was said, that the expence of maintaining the American settlements in time of peace, and defending them from our enemies in time of war, are so great, that all the commercial benefits we derive from them are hardly sufficient to indemnify us; and even those benefits, we are told, become every day more and more precarious, because these colonies begin to feel their own strength, and to discover an inclination for independency. Time and nature, it is thought by some, will too soon render them superior to our controul; and, in support of this alarming notion of their assuming an independent state, that celebrated political writer Mr. Trenchard is quoted, who, it seems, made a jest of the supposition, that they would continue longer dependent on us than necessity compelled them to be, for no other reason than because their grandmothers and ours had been formerly acquainted. Others maintain, that though they are divided by rival interests, and discordant religious principles, they will always unite when the mother-country furnishes them a fair opportunity to complain of oppression; and, in short, that every thing is to be dreaded from their increased population, and skill in agriculture, arts, and manufactures.

THAT I may not omit any of the apprehensions of mercantile people, who have taken pains with the subject, I must close this summary of the objections to our American settlements with those which the author of the Comparison between the Importance of the British Dominions in India and in America has advanced, in order to prejudice the mother-country in favour of her India commerce, and late acquisitions there, and to excite her to set much less value than she has hitherto done on her dominions in America. I am the more disposed to be
thus

thus impartial, because I think it would have been unfair not to have mentioned the arguments of this unknown writer, whom I consider as a very dangerous enemy to our American brethren.

“ THE natural necessity and utility of commerce arises from the
 “ difference of production in the two trading countries. And, from
 “ this cause, the productions of India, whether of nature or art,
 “ being altogether different from those of Britain, it proceeds, that
 “ the articles of commerce which India receives at present from Britain
 “ can never cease to be necessary to India: and, through the same
 “ cause, those articles which Britain receives from India will ever
 “ continue to be useful and necessary to Britain; of consequence, the
 “ commercial interests of this dependent dominion can never possibly
 “ clash with those of the sovereign; on the contrary, they must ever
 “ contribute highly to her benefit.

“ WHEREAS America differeth but little from Britain in either climate
 “ or soil, her natural productions are therefore nearly the same; so that
 “ she possesseth the rough materials of almost all the manufactures of
 “ Britain; and her intimate connection with the mother-country
 “ affords her the opportunity of minutely acquainting herself with the
 “ art of manufacturing those materials. From whence it is evident,
 “ that almost all the articles of commerce which America hath
 “ hitherto received from Britain are no farther necessary to her, than
 “ as they are rendered so, by either the want of hands to carry on
 “ those manufactures, or by the laws of the sovereign restraining her
 “ from the free exercise of certain arts. But the population of America
 “ proceeds with a rapid speed, and that will of course remove the first
 “ impediment to her supplying herself, even the want of hands to
 “ manufacture. This population will at the same time increase the
 “ importance of America; and in proportion as this importance
 “ advances, so will the free exercise of every art extend, through the
 “ diminution of the sovereign's restraining power. Here is then
 “ sufficient ground to apprehend, that the several articles of commerce
 “ which America receives at present from Britain, will not only soon
 “ cease to be necessary to America; but that she will also have it in
 “ her

“ her power, and we cannot doubt her inclination, to rival the
“ trade of her mother-country with other nations, in those identical
“ articles.”

I HAVE before observed, that the earliest and the strongest objection to our American settlements is, the draining the mother-country of her people; and as their increasing population is made the basis of the apprehensions that they will rival us in manufactures, and become independent, it is my chief duty and concern to set aside this groundless objection.

IN the first place, it is a maxim, “ That the wealth of a nation
“ consists in the number of its inhabitants.” But if those inhabitants are not properly classed, and if the populousness of a nation is not found in the classes of industrious, useful, labouring hands *, no wealth can accrue to the state merely from numbers. Secondly, it will be found, that the people who have been occasionally sent to some of our colonies, and others, who have from time to time made voluntary emigrations to them, were not of those classes of inhabitants, whose numbers, by their useful employment, form the wealth of the kingdom of Great Britain. And it will farther appear, that if we had not possessed foreign plantations for these emigrants to reside in, some of them could not, and others would not have remained at home! so that we should have lost so many subjects without resource, by their flying to the dominions of foreign princes. To illustrate the truth of these assertions, I must remind you of one of the true principles of commerce; “ Toleration
“ in matters of religious opinion, generally styled religious liberty.” The intolerant spirit of bigotted churchmen, which corrupted administration, and destroyed one part of the freedom of the British constitution, it is well known, drove away great numbers of the subjects of England, in the reigns of James I. Charles I. and James II. and happy it was for this nation, that the distressed wanderers still entertained a natural affection for their native country, and were desirous rather of cultivating barren desarts, under the dominion of the crown

* See pages 57 and 58 on Manufactures.

of Great Britain, provided they could enjoy the civil and religious rights of the British constitution, than to resort to the most fertile territories of other powers. They cultivated the wilds of America, and settled the colony of New England, where they soon verified, by their industry, that most excellent observation of Montesquieu, "that countries are not cultivated in proportion to their fertility, but their liberty;" and for whom have these best of men, these firmest patriots, been continually labouring ever since? Not so much for themselves, as for their mother-country; that they and their posterity, though thrown at so great a distance from Britain, might again become useful and loyal subjects. Not discouraged by the severity of the climate, by the surface overgrown with briars and thorns, by the early opposition of the natives, a race of people fierce and false, untractable, treacherous, irreconcilable, bloody, and merciless, they cultivated an ungrateful soil, to enable them to open an intercourse with their native country, and to receive her manufactures. Often massacred, and sometimes driven away by the fury of the inhuman savages, who were guilty of the most horrible cruelties, who would rarely make peace, and more rarely keep their agreements when made: often starved out and famished, and sometimes a whole body of planters wasted and perished with cold and want, reduced to extremities, obliged to abandon the country: these virtuous, indefatigable men still persisted, till, by incessant toil, they planted, inhabited, and cultivated those inhospitable climates, those supposed barren countries! those trifling little spots of islands! not worth looking at by the Spaniards; and at length, that vast share of the North American continent now enjoyed by the British nation, which contains almost the whole sea-coast, and abounds with a number of navigable rivers and secure harbours. Emigrants of another species settled Virginia and Barbadoes, and others Jamaica; all which colonies have been brought to be the richest and most improved of any in that part of the world, and now answer the most beneficial purposes of universal commerce to their mother-country; even to such a degree, that it is positively affirmed, that they bring in more wealth to Old England than all the mines of gold and silver in New Spain, afford to

the Spanish nation. We believe it will not be doubted, that a people so disturbed in their religious liberty, as were the dissenters from the church of England by law established, could no longer continue to be useful inhabitants at home; discontented with the ecclesiastical part of our constitution, exposed to arbitrary fines and censures, their lives and properties held by a precarious tenure, and the latter always at the mercy of a bishop's court; they could no longer exert those talents which render inland trade and universal commerce successful; and, in these unhappy circumstances, they were more busily employed about the means of seeking new habitations, where they might enjoy liberty of conscience, than in pursuing useful arts of invention and industry; and if they had not found out a New England; Germany and Holland must have received the major part, as they did some of them, and all of them would probably have been lost forever to England. We see an example of this, at the revocation of the edict of Nantz. Had Lewis the XIV. offered his protestant subjects the full enjoyment of their religious rights in any of the French colonies, they would not have fled to Amsterdam, to Germany, and to London. And it is a further confirmation, that such sort of emigrants (from their minds being disturbed) are no longer useful subjects at home, to know, that the French court complained, that these Huguenots no longer attended to their business, but spent all their time in religious assemblies, and in plots against the government, (legal means to recover their natural liberty).

LET us now turn our thoughts to the subjects who peopled Virginia and Barbadoes. These at first were a loose vagrant people, vicious, and destitute of means to live at home, who had so debilitated themselves by debauchery, or lost their reputation by misbehaviour, that no one would employ them. Such as these, the merchants by their agents, and the masters of vessels, by their emissaries, (called at that time Spirits), picked up in the streets of London, Bristol, and other seaports, and cloathed and transported them, to be employed in these plantations; and since, it has been the impolitic custom to transport felons to these islands, and to Jamaica. Swarms of inhabitants of this
fort

fort could never enrich a free country, where they cannot be made slaves, even though they have justly forfeited their liberties by theft, nor could most of them have remained with us. As to the emigrations of unfortunate men flying for debt, it is certainly much better that they should have British colonies to inhabit, than that they should carry away their arts and industry, and perhaps a private purse, to Dunkirk, or any other French or Dutch asylum.

BUT another great cause of emigration from Great Britain to the last-mentioned settlements, was, the revolutions in the circumstances and situations of people of property during the civil wars, and at the restoration. Individuals of both parties, when they lost their honours or estates, or were in danger of persecution, repaired to these plantations, which very soon peopled and improved them; for many families carried over considerable effects.

IT has now, I believe, been demonstrated to your satisfaction, that the colonies did not formerly drain us of such inhabitants as enrich a country; but it will be said, what have they done of late years, and what are they now doing? Most undoubtedly they are annually depriving you of useful inhabitants. But this is not their fault; it is the consequence of the various discouragements I have stated at large under the head of Population; and again I repeat it, they had much better resort to our colonies, and there in some measure still remain in a degree useful to us, by consuming our manufactures sent to the colonies, and by raising the materials for them to be sent home, than fly to France or Germany. However, it will be found upon the whole, that the numbers of useful hands who go to America, are not so considerable as it is generally imagined, and they would be greatly lessened, if the proper means were taken to lower provisions, and to give greater encouragement to them at home.

DR. FRANKLIN, in his observations concerning the increase of mankind, acknowledges the rapidity with which our American colonies have been peopled, and says, that, in a little time, they will take off every thing we make that suits their consumption. But he adds, that notwithstanding this increase, so vast is the territory of North America,

it will require many ages to settle it fully ; and till it is fully settled, labour will never be cheap there, where no man continues long a labourer for others, but gets a plantation of his own ; no man continues long a journeyman to a trade, but goes among the new settlers, and sets up for himself. It follows from this situation of our colonies in that quarter, that labour cannot be cheap enough for some centuries, if ever, to establish manufactures there.

OUR apprehensions therefore, that they will become manufactures to such a degree as to diminish considerably their consumption of the manufactures of the mother-country, and in the end be enabled to do without them, are groundless, and this objection to our colonies partly answered. Yet it must be owned, that extreme oppression may drive whole societies, as well as individuals, to acts of desperation ; but it is the interest, and we know it is the inclination of our most gracious sovereign, to prevent them in future, if any unthinking or tyrannic minister shall hereafter propose measures which have a tendency to force them to forsake their true interest, which is the clearing and cultivating the vast quantities of land lying waste in their different soils and climates, so as to make them produce every rough material for our manufactures, every naval store, and, in fine, every other commodity we find ourselves necessitated to purchase on exorbitant terms from foreign countries. If all or most of these can be produced in our settlements, and paid for with our manufactures, it must surely be the height of folly, or of blind prejudice and partiality, not to give the colonists all possible encouragement to convert their uncultivated lands to mines of commercial treasure.

OUR unnatural jealousies and idle fears concerning our American brethren, are now happily subsided, and we seem in some measure to feel the force of SULLY's maxim : " The best means of making the dependencies of the empire useful, are to make them happy ; and the best way to tax them is to confer benefits upon them." This must be the rule of administration at home, with respect to our colonies in America, the best dependencies of the British empire. So far as we have adopted it, we have reaped the fruits of the favours we have conferred ;

conferred*; and we want only an upright, dispassionate, able statesman, at the head of the administration of the colonies, to enable us to complete the glorious union of commercial interests between them and the mother country, and to cement the bands of natural affection and sound policy, which alone can preserve the present formidable power and opulence of Great Britain.

THE more we consider the value of the imports we do and may make hereafter from our American colonies, of necessary articles for home-consumption and re-exportation, some of which articles we formerly imported, and others we must continue to import from foreign countries, till our colonies can supply them, the more clearly we must be convinced, that all the arguments of the author of the Comparison between our dominions in India and America are futile with respect to the latter. It is granted that the climate and soil is nearly the same in some parts of her American settlements; but in others this is not the case; and the articles she is capable of producing for the service of the mother-country do differ very widely from the product of the soil of Britain; but admitting they are generally similar, it is well known that the small extent of the British isles could never produce a sufficient quantity of raw silk, hemp, flax, iron, naval stores, &c. for her consumption. If therefore the colonies can supply a deficiency which used to be made good by foreign countries, by which our manufactures (particularly the linen) were often at their mercy, he must be void of all commercial knowledge, who will not allow that the commerce with

* We have already experienced the good effects of such encouragements, in the importation of pitch and tar, which Sweden had once monopolized, and rendered extremely dear to us; nay, when a war broke out with France, it was found that we had not pitch and tar enough for the use of the royal navy, nor could we procure it from Sweden, but upon their own very disadvantageous terms. The people of England took the alarm at this, and the merchants made application to parliament, that the making these commodities in our own plantations might be encouraged; and the encouragement given by parliament soon produced great quantities from thence. Indeed, they so much increased in the making of pitch and tar, that we were soon enabled to export great quantities, which fully reimbursed us for the bounty. This would be the case with all our imports from Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, as likewise for raw silk, an article of infinite consequence to this kingdom, and very capable of being cultivated in many parts of America.

these

these colonies, founded on dominion, must be preferable to that of India, and more likely to be permanent. For if the colonists are profitably employed in raising and exporting to Great Britain, commodities that we cannot raise, nor procure on such beneficial terms elsewhere, it follows naturally, that they will not attempt to disuse our manufactures, and that the intercourse founded on the true commercial principle of gain on both sides must be durable.

THAT they possess the rough materials of our manufactures is very true, and that they have frequent opportunities of learning our arts; but we may always act so prudently and politically as to prevent their inclination to make use of the knowledge they acquire, by employing them more to their advantage. Government at home may likewise interpose, and stop the exportation of tools, and the emigration of its useful hands, if it is found that we lose any great number of the latter; but it cannot go any further; nor does there appear to be any occasion at present to make new laws for that purpose; enforcing those already subsisting will be sufficient, if the evil gets to any height.

THE supposed disposition and growing ability of the colonies to shake off their dependency is the only remaining apprehension we have to remove; and, on this subject, I know nothing I can offer so satisfactory as the following remarks.

THE strength of all the colonies united is weakness when opposed to Great Britain; yet even Great Britain should tremble, if they were united against her in a just cause.

IT can never be the interest of Great Britain to administer such a cause; and we have the best reasons to hope that the experience we have gained by the late unhappy differences will prevent or defeat in time every ministerial project having such a tendency.

THE superior power, and legislative pre-eminence of England, without violating a law of justice, or reducing America to slavery, can for ever enforce her dependence. The superior power of the mother-country consists in a formidable navy, with which, having a good cause, and the constitution of the whole empire on her side, she may always enforce obedience from our American dependencies. But God

forbid we should ever be reduced to the necessity of turning its strength against one part of our own family !

BUT if Great Britain does not deprive her American subjects of the rights and privileges which they are entitled to by her excellent constitution, which is not local but universal, and embraces every new-born infant through her extensive empire ; it is not possible, in the nature of things, that they can have the least idea of becoming independent. I shall therefore only add, that we have still another security, not noticed by any authors I have read, though some have mentioned the difference of their religious systems of faith.

IF we were to suppose them capable of forming either a monarchical or republican government within themselves, is it to be credited that any of the sects would submit to let a different persuasion be the dominant religion of the country. A general toleration on the most extensive footing would be readily granted to all ; but in every government there must be one established communion, which will have more or less, but always some degree of superiority over the others. Would the quakers consent to let the presbyterian system be the established church, or the presbyterians cede this right to the quakers ? I humbly apprehend neither would yield up such an important point ; because the internal administration of the civil government would always incline, in some measure, towards the predominant religious system. This obstacle to the independency of the colonies is drawn from general observations on the most free governments in Europe. In Holland, toleration is conducted on such an equitable plan, that no dissenting sect of christianity can complain of want of protection and indulgence ; but still the Calvinists alone have the right, *de sonner la cloche* (to ring the bell), which is the mark of superiority in most countries, and proclaims the established religion. It is likewise very visible, that the manners of the people indicate the system of religion authorized by the state ; and it may be said, with great truth, that, in Holland, every burgher you meet is a portrait of John Calvin.

It cannot therefore be credited, that different societies of people,
whose

whose ancestors exiled themselves from their mother-country, not only that they might enjoy their several modes of religious worship, and their particular opinions, unmolested by persecution or censure, but also that they might make their respective systems the reigning religion in the plantations they formed, should so far degenerate from the spirit of their forefathers, as to suffer any one of these systems to bend to another, or submit to bare toleration, instead of absolute dominion. With the most sublime notions of civil and religious liberty imaginable, the quakers in Philadelphia, and the presbyterians in New England, enjoy, in their separate provinces, a religious pre-eminence, and spiritual jurisdiction, which I am apt to think they could never be brought to give up to each other.

IN short, whether we consider the religious or civil establishments of the colonies, we must be sensible, that they cannot think of bettering their condition by any scheme of independency whatever; so that notwithstanding any pretensions to the contrary, we may rest assured, that the dominion and commerce of Great Britain, while both continue to be exercised on the principles of the British constitution, will be secure, steady, less precarious, and, in the end, more profitable than our Indian connections.

NOTHING more need be added to illustrate the commercial principle of colonization. I apprehend I have plainly shewn that it is incontrovertible, and that the British colonies are established on such a footing, that they are the chief source of her universal commerce, extensive navigation, and national strength.

BUT lest it should be apprehended, that I mean to depreciate the other commercial connections of Great Britain, I shall beg leave to engage your attention in the next place to the important subject of factories.

IT is a true principle of universal commerce to establish FACTORIES in foreign countries, with which a maritime commercial state has large trading concerns.

THESE establishments have generally proved very beneficial to commerce, but they must never be put on a footing with colonies.

COLONIES

COLONIES are to be considered as large provinces or districts of an extensive empire; they are members of the same body; they are dependencies on one supreme government; and they ought to have but one joint interest in common with the great political head from which they derive their existence.

FACTORIES are establishments of a different nature. They are neither founded on dominion, or such legal right as will not admit of dispute. They depend sometimes on treaties of commerce, and sometimes on the arbitrary will of the sovereign, who permits them in his dominions. Factories therefore must depend on a secondary principle for success. This is not the case with respect to colonies.

TREATIES OF COMMERCE have already been noticed, as forming one part of our commercial institutes; and, if they had been as religiously observed since, as they were in the time of Elizabeth, when they were first set on foot, with national dignity and honour, in this country; we might venture to approximate the ideas of colonies and factories.

BUT while the faith of princes depends only on their want of power to violate these treaties, and that as soon as they are able, they plead the vile principle of political necessity, as an excuse for setting them aside; all the immediate advantages derived from any factories, however great or opulent, (though they may overbalance the profits of colonies for any short period of time) will not entitle them to be considered in an equal point of view.

IT must be granted, that the benefits derived from factories in countries where we have no commercial treaties, to secure the lives and property of our factors, or to entitle them to certain privileges and immunities necessary for their welfare; must be highly precarious, and not to be depended on for any number of years. And as I shall hereafter shew you how little reliance is to be made on modern treaties, I shall beg leave for the present to confine myself to those considerable factories we have established in Asia, which the author of the Comparison so often mentioned, has preferred to our American colonies, in point of national, commercial benefit.

If this pamphlet had not been written intentionally to bias the three estates of the realm in favour of our Indian commerce, to the detriment of our American colonies, and even to alienate the affections of the inhabitants of Great Britain from their industrious, virtuous brethren in America, it might have passed unnoticed. But I have another motive for scrutinizing this piece closely: we live in a time when the broachers of the most pernicious doctrines, to poison the minds of their fellow-subjects, receive princely rewards for their assiduity, and are loaded with caresses by our great men. It is therefore the duty of every good citizen to explode their tenets, and to remove the prejudices they have rendered fashionable, to the subversion of that union and harmony which ought to subsist between the American colonies and the mother-country.

THE advocate in support of the British dominion at Bengal rests the merit of his cause chiefly on the territory of Bengal, which he styles a British dependent dominion; and he affirms, that it is capable of yielding to Britain, in return for her small share of attention, not only more rich, but also more durable benefits, than all her other foreign possessions. At the same time he owns, that the system of government which Britain hath permitted to be established in Bengal must be productive of ruinous consequences, if a remedy is not speedily applied. But not to avail myself of such a manifest contradiction in terms, I beg leave to fix your attention to a glaring partiality in this little piece. The author pretends to draw a comparison between Bengal and our American colonies, and afterwards confines all his arguments, and his arithmetical calculations of the commercial benefits, solely to North America; for which reason I shall not enter into a detail of this defective part of the performance; but when I state the balance of commerce in general, I shall shew, that all the Indian connections, taken collectively, fall short of the commercial benefits drawn from our American colonies.

THE only point remaining to be contested with this author is, the stability of dominion. He insists, that the dominion of Great Britain over America is precarious, and that she will one day or other lose it.

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On the contrary, he maintains, that her dominion over Bengal, with very little care and attention, will be permanent.

I MIGHT destroy the whole chain of his reasoning, by proving that Bengal cannot be called a dependent dominion on the crown of Great Britain; in fact the whole kingdom is only a province of the mogul's empire, and a revolution may happen at any time, as sudden as those which frequently took place before the peace made by Lord Clive, by which our company may be dispossessed of their factories in Bengal, and the British crown of its pretended dominion of this country. As the matter at present stands, the East India company's governor and council of Bengal pay an annual tribute, in consideration for the administration of this kingdom, and the enjoyment of its revenues, to the nabob, or viceroy of Bengal, and another to the great mogul. The most therefore that can be said with truth is, that the English East India company have, by force of arms, obliged the powers of that part of India to submit to a cession of the territory of Bengal, by a commercial treaty highly advantageous to this company; that it enjoys the external form of a government under its direction, but pays annual tributes, which shew, that the right of dominion is still vested in the mogul, who, whenever he thinks proper to break the treaty, may appoint a nabob of Bengal, an enemy to this company and to their nation, and the company will be immediately involved in a bloody war, which may deprive them not only of this sham dominion, but even destroy every factory they have in the country.

BUT I wish to meet him on other ground; for which reason, let the vain idea of dominion be pursued, and let us attend to his arguments in support of the stability of this dominion.

“ THE possession of a foreign dominion stands in danger from only
 “ one cause; namely, the attempt of other powers to wrest that
 “ dominion from the hands of the present proprietor; and this danger
 “ is greater or less, in proportion to the abilities, opportunities, and
 “ dispositions of those powers to execute such purpose. Now the
 “ powers that are to be here dreaded, must necessarily be, either the
 “ native subjects themselves, or otherwise external enemies; and the

“ first of these, even the native subjects of a considerable foreign
“ dominion, are in reason to be much more dreaded than any foreign
“ enemy; because, in the first place, the motive of their enmity is
“ more immediate, active, and durable, than even the desire of retrieving
“ their liberty and independence. In the second place, a domestic
“ foe hath greater opportunities, and therefore greater ability, of
“ injuring the sovereign, than a foreign enemy. And, in the third
“ place, this natural passion for liberty doth commonly stimulate the
“ natives to call in a foreign power, to aid them in expelling their
“ present masters; whereby both these sources of danger become
“ united.

“ BUT in the case of Bengal, there is not perhaps on this globe
“ a country so peculiarly exempted from this domestic danger
“ as it is; the natives of which are so exceeding mild, pliant,
“ and submissive, that this, which, in a northern clime, affords
“ the principal ground of apprehension, is here not even reckoned
“ upon. The inhabitants of Bengal have been more despotically
“ governed than those of any other country, yet we do not find
“ that they ever made any attempts to reduce or restrain the
“ authority of their princes, or to redress their own grievances by
“ force. For we cannot admit the conspiracy of Meer Jaffier to be
“ an attempt of this nature; the treachery of two or three individuals,
“ tending to promote their own ambitious views by the means of
“ foreigners, cannot be termed a struggle made by the natives to
“ recover their liberty. But the timid backwardness of those
“ conspirators, on that occasion, discovers how little disposed these
“ people are to dangerous attempts; and the ready, universal, and
“ unreserved submission of the whole country to the small force of the
“ English, indicates a most singular aptitude to be governed. Since
“ that revolution, they have been subjected to a tyranny, such as was
“ never till then heard of, and which is, in its nature, the most
“ exquisitely oppressive, and completely destructive, that can be
“ conceived, even a mercantile, joined to the political and military
“ despotism of foreigners and strangers; yet the evident prospect of
“ ruin hath not hitherto served to rouse that people into resistance.

“ THIS extraordinary implicit submission of the industrious inhabitants of a wealthy, populous, and extensive country, is certainly the most valuable of all qualities proper to a dependent dominion. For to it the sovereign owes those mighty advantages arising, as hath been shewn, from the absolute disposal of the rich finances of this country; and by it he is not only secured from that first and greatest source of danger to his property, even the machinations of the native subjects, but he likewise derives therefrom a certain aid against the attempts of external enemies.

“ BUT this valuable property of Bengal will appear more conspicuously, by continuing the comparison, on this head, betwixt it and America; though in fact it will, in this particular, appear to be rather a contrast. For this latter country, which was originally discovered and planted by Britain, hath been by her nursed and cherished for above two hundred years, at a mighty expence of her wealth and strength; so that the present inhabitants stand indebted to her for every thing they possess, for even their country, and their very being; yet no sooner have these inhabitants perceived their own strength so far formed through the indulgent care of this parent, as that her support hath become somewhat less necessary, than they have set about establishing a distinction of interest, refusing to the mother country the most distant participation in their finances and resources, and disputing the most solemn orders of her government; infomuch that the dominion of Britain over America, stands in much greater danger from the disposition of the inhabitants themselves, than from all her enemies.

“ THE genius of the Americans is illiberally selfish, and fordidly attached to their own interest; therefore Britain, by promoting the grandeur of that country, diminishes her own importance, and rears up a rival to her commerce. The Americans are at the same time of a disposition haughty and insolent, impatient of rule, disdaining subjection, and by all means affecting independence; so that, without reckoning upon external enemies, we find that it demands a large share of the force, and almost the entire attention of Britain,

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“ to preserve even the appearance of dominion over the inhabitants
“ themselves ; but it is to be feared, that, in a little time, her whole
“ force and attention will not suffice to render that country in any
“ shape useful to her.

“ The other source of danger to a foreign dominion arises from the
“ attempts of external enemies ; and these, with respect to Bengal,
“ may be divided into two classes ; namely, the native powers,
“ adjoining to that country, and the European states trading to and
“ possessing force in India.

“ As to the first of these, the native powers, they are but little
“ formidable to Britain, provided she conducts herself with any degree
“ of prudence and moderation. The climate of India, rendering the
“ inhabitants languid, effeminate, and soft, will ever prove an effectual
“ bar to their becoming truly warlike. For, notwithstanding that
“ they are not deficient in temporary courage, yet are they totally
“ devoid of that vigour and activity, that firmness and persevering
“ obstinacy, which is peculiar to the natives of a colder clime. Being
“ altogether incapable of application, they can never, of themselves,
“ attain to any degree of discipline, but must be led, or rather driven
“ into it, by others of a more masculine disposition than themselves ;
“ and no sooner is this compelling force withdrawn, than they relapse
“ into their primitive rudeness. Nay, even when they have acquired
“ the exercise of arms, unless they are headed by a body of Europeans,
“ whom they regard as a bulwark betwixt them and danger, they
“ will never be brought to act with steadiness in the field. For these
“ reasons, the warlike ability of an Indian neighbour is not to be
“ greatly dreaded : and the same cause that prevents their becoming
“ warlike, doth also render them less forward to hazardous enterprizes ;
“ they are impressed with an awe and dread of the military prowess of
“ Europeans ; it must therefore be a very urgent provocation, or
“ otherwise a very glaring opportunity, that will induce a people thus
“ indolent, timid, and impatient of fatigue, to engage in war with
“ them ; and certainly it is in the power of Britain, to evade giving
“ them such occasion ; if she shall conduct herself by the rules of
“ discretion

“ discretion and of equity, she may not only escape the enmity, but
 “ conciliate the friendship of her Indian neighbours. It may not be
 “ improper however to observe, that, if we even suppose hostilities
 “ from this quarter, Bengal is wonderfully secured against the invasion
 “ of any of the neighbouring states; for in the north it is barricadoed
 “ by a chain of mountains, with a very few difficult passes; towards
 “ the east it is secured by impenetrable woods, and many deep rivers,
 “ besides that there is no state of any consequence on that side; the
 “ south is bounded by the sea, the shore of which is every where
 “ inaccessible, except by the river of Bengal: so that the west is the
 “ only quarter open to the attack of an Indian enemy.

“ But the European nations, trading to and possessing force in India,
 “ are enemies far more formidable to the possessions of Britain in that
 “ quarter, than are the natives. However, of these, there is only
 “ Holland and France, from whom she hath any reason to apprehend
 “ danger. And as to the first of these, she is so much embarrassed
 “ with the charge and defence of what she hath already acquired, that
 “ there is no great probability of her molesting Britain, unless a very
 “ favourable occasion should tempt her to take advantage. But France,
 “ being the natural enemy of Britain in Europe, will be ever ready to
 “ attack her in India; and the power, activity, and opportunities of
 “ this adversary are such, that it will demand the utmost care and
 “ vigilance of Britain to guard herself against them.”

THERE is but one rational method of forming probable conjectures concerning the future fate of kingdoms; and this is, by a reference to their past history, and it is by pursuing this method, that I propose to shew the absurdity of our author's pretensions, in comparing the stability of a dominion which has been subject to several accidents, and to disturbances, which threatened various revolutions in the course of the last twenty years; with that of a country, which has remained in our possession by his own account upwards of two hundred years.

IF I make it appear that we at present possess Bengal only by the fortune of war, and that we hold it by a very precarious tenure indeed, the folly, if not the iniquity, of the comparison will at once surprize us, and excite our indignation.

IN the year 1751, Mr. (now Lord) Clive began his career of military glory ; and at this period, Bengal was in danger of a revolution, which, had it succeeded, might have put an end to the factories of our East India company in that kingdom. A nabob, whose name is of no importance in this place, was set up by the French, in opposition to the nabob of Arcot, the friend and ally of the company. The nabob in the French interest, joined by another powerful Indian chief, and supplied with French officers, artillery, and ammunition, defeated and slew the company's ally. They then made themselves nabobs of Arcot and Golconda, and gathered so much strength, that, in 1752, they approached within nine miles of Madras. But the army of the new nabob of Arcot being defeated by the gallant Clive, and the nabob himself having been made prisoner, his head was struck off by another Indian nabob, our ally, which restored tranquillity to the English company.

IN 1756, (only four years after the last commotions) the French seized on the most considerable factories of our company on the coast of Coromandel ; and, in the same year, Calcutta, and all the subordinate settlements or factories of the English in Bengal were taken and destroyed by Surajah Dowla, a new nabob of Bengal, who had been spirited up by our enemies to extirpate the English factories within his dominions ; the cruel tragedy that succeeded is too well known, and too severely felt by many families in England, to need recital. In fine, this tyrant sent pioneers to raze Calcutta to the ground, and wrote to the governor of Madras, that no English subject should for the future presume to settle within his territory of Bengal. The following year, Lord Clive by land, and Admiral Watson by sea, aided with land-forces under the command of another brave officer, Colonel Coote, laid siege to Calcutta, recovered it, and forced the inhuman nabob into concessions much to the honour and advantage of the company. He promised, amongst other things, not to disturb the English in any of those privileges or possessions specified in the phirmand or patent of the mogul : (this very promise, by the bye, shews, that the company possess Bengal by licence ;) but soon after, the haughty nabob forgot
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his promises, oppressed the British factors, and prepared for a fresh perfidious attack on their settlements: To avert this blow, the company were obliged to countenance and support a conspiracy formed against him by his own prime-minister, Jaffier Aly Khan. The well-concerted plan succeeded, Sujah Dowla the tyrant was deposed, Jaffier was proclaimed nabob of Bengal, by the assistance of Lord Clive, and the enemy of the English met the fate which all tyrants deserve, he was put to death by his successor. The French were excluded by the new nabob from all commerce in Bengal, and the English company were re-instated in all their privileges, indemnified for their losses, and their officers and troops liberally rewarded for their valour.

IN 1759, the English dominion in Bengal was again menaced by a new enemy. The Dutch factory, jealous of the extension of the English trade, determined, if possible, to engross to themselves the whole saltpetre branch of commerce. For this purpose, the governor of Batavia, it is supposed with the connivance of the nabob, (indebted to the English for his viceroyship) fitted out an armament of seven ships of war, under pretence of reinforcing the garrisons of their settlements in Bengal. But the vigilant Lord Clive, being at Calcutta when some of those ships attempted to go up the river of Bengal to a strong fort they possessed, called Chinchura, complained to the nabob, who sent an order to the director and council of Hughley, forbidding this armament to pass that garrison at the mouth of the river. But as soon as the Dutch commodore had got all his squadron together, he passed up the river, notwithstanding the order given to the council at Hughley; and in his way, to revenge the affront he pretended to have received, in being detained in his passage to Chinchura, he took several small vessels belonging to the English company. This occasioned Lord Clive to order three of the company's ships to attack the whole Dutch armament, which was defeated, and the commodore taken prisoner. The Dutch forces however had landed, to the number of eleven hundred; but these likewise were vanquished; and it was observed, that the nabob, at the head of a considerable army, kept a suspicious neutrality, during the battle, as if he meant to join the Dutch if they had conquered;

but when he saw them defeated, he made a tender of his service to the English, and even offered to subdue the Dutch fort at Chinchura with his own army.

IN 1761, another disturbance was attempted by means of the French interest; for they engaged a prince of the mogul empire, Shah Zadda, to take the field at the head of fourscore thousand men, against the forces of the East India company, commanded by Major John Carnack, and reinforced by the subah of Bengal. Since this period, we have been continually alarmed with the apprehensions of a revolt from us by the subah of Bengal; nor can it be wondered at, when every species of extortion is practised by the company's servants, to enrich themselves at the expence of the true interests of their masters. After the concise review I have given of the sudden great revolutions in our East India company's factory at Bengal, how absurd is it to talk of our dominion there, or to compare it with that which we really possess in America?

UPON the whole, therefore, I must conclude, that our American colonies are establishments on the truest principles of commerce, and that they are the primary source of the maritime strength, riches, and prosperity of Great Britain; and that our East India factories are the second efficient cause of her immense opulence.

AND I must leave it on your minds, as an incontrovertable truth, that the British American colonies demand the first, and most powerful support and encouragement of the three estates of the realm.

ON ASSURANCE, OR INSURANCE.

THE principle of insurance is one of the most beneficial that could possibly be introduced into universal commerce, and it is one of the chief causes of its prosperity in every maritime state.

As I shall studiously avoid tedious dissertations, which are foreign to the title of my work, my readers must not expect to find in this place, either the laws of insurance, or of avaries; subjects in themselves so important and delicate, that they require volumes to illustrate them; but that I may not leave those, whom a general thirst after knowledge, or interest may prompt to investigate them, without guides, I refer them with great satisfaction, to two most excellent English authors, whose performances do honour to their country *.

HAVING discharged this duty, I shall now demonstrate the great advantages derived from the principle of insurance to commerce in general, and refute some erroneous notions concerning it, which ignorant people have propagated, with a view of bringing it into discredit.

EVERY person, the least conversant in marine affairs, must be sensible of the great peril of navigation; and those who understand geography need not be told, that some voyages are more dangerous than others. But even if we could suppose the subjects of this commercial country ignorant of the principles of geography and navigation, the common

* Magin on Insurances, 2 vol. 4to.

Lex Mercatoria Rediviva, folio, by Wyndham Beauwes, British Consul at Seville.

news-papers are but too faithful monitors of the hazard attending adventures by sea. So general is this subject, that there is scarce a family in Great Britain, high or low, but what has, or may have, some occasion to experience the great perils of the ocean.

To obviate the fatal effects of the various accidents to which voyages by sea are liable, is the business of insurance; and the æra in which insurance was fixed on such a creditable and advantageous footing, as to make it a profitable branch of business, by which means it became general, may properly be stiled the epoch of the resurrection of commerce in England. I need only remind you, that you owe the activity of this principle to the wise administration of Queen Elizabeth.

It will require no great depth of judgment to perceive, that before the practice of insurance became general, and was established on a secure basis, commerce must have been extremely limited and confined, from the natural dread of the perils of the sea. The loss of a ship richly laden was sufficient to ruin a capital house, and to reduce merchants of the first rank from affluence to mendicity.

YET, to maintain the respectable character and figure in life of an English merchant, it was necessary to run the greatest risks: to adventure but little, to be only part owner of a valuable cargo, could never support a family, whose head was either invested with the dignity of magistracy, or the honour of a seat in parliament; the more bold and insensible, therefore, adventured largely; but as the timid and cautious will always be the majority in the mercantile world, the progress of commerce was slow, and (making allowance for great losses) very often inadequate to the expences of carrying it on. A commercial undertaking was often set on foot by private associations of merchants, and conducted for some time with proper spirit and vigour; but suddenly the loss or capture of an homeward-bound ship, or two, dissolved the association, injured the most opulent among the adventurers so much, that they were either disheartened, or disabled to engage in a second enterprize, and totally ruined the less wealthy partners in the scheme.

WHILE commerce was, by means of the double dangers of storms
and

and of enemies, reduced to a languishing condition, a phoenix sprung from her expiring flame. Necessity gave birth to insurance, as it had been the parent of mercantile companies.

To give new powers to commerce, by means of a common fund and joint interest, was the object of companies.

To secure these powers from declination or diminution, and thus to render the joint interest permanent, was the design of insurance.

BUT it has been objected, that the premiums for insurance have raised the price of manufactures, and have been one cause of making them too dear for foreign markets.

THIS proposition I strenuously deny; because it appears very evident to me, that before insurance was generally known and encouraged, manufactures and merchandize of every denomination were exported and imported on worse terms.

THE merchant-adventurer set a value on them proportioned to the risk he conceived he run in the voyage. The ship's husband, or owner, set an higher price on the freight, having no other indemnification for the peril of his ship. The captain or master, and the seamen, followed the same rule, with respect to wages; in proportion to the hazard of their lives, they very equitably rated their demands.

If therefore we estimate the probable amount of all these charges on commodities sent to, or received from foreign countries, which depended on no certain rules of calculation, we cannot hesitate a moment to affirm, that insurance has not enhanced the price of merchandize either inwards or outwards. On the contrary, in my humble opinion, we must have exported our native commodities much cheaper since the universal practice of insurance, than before; for the premium paid by the merchant for insurance of his cargo, or by the owner for his ship, bears no proportion to the additional price which the one put upon his merchandize, and the other on his bottom, as a counterbalance against the perils of the sea.

THOSE who object to exclusive commercial companies must be strong advocates for insurance; for when we consider how very few private individuals are in a condition to undertake any great commercial enterprises,

enterprises, (and without a number of very great ones, this nation could not support its power and dignity) the advantages of insurance, which enables even a private adventurer to risk his all at sea, stand confessed.

THERE is another circumstance in favour of the insured, which I cannot pass over in silence. The insurers are subject to a variety of frauds and impositions from all the parties concerned on the side of the insured, such as the captain and his crew; whereas the insurer stands alone, relies on the good faith of the contractors with him, and can neither elude nor alter the force of his signature. We scarce ever hear of an action at law brought against insurers; but we have instances almost every term of the roguery of persons insured, and of contests respecting avaries. But a code, to be stiled The Law of Merchants, would prevent many of these, if properly compiled, and if a council of commerce was established in every capital town in this kingdom, to decide commercial disputes.

OUR principle being incontrovertable, we will proceed to answer another objection to part of the practice, as it is followed in England.

THE insurance of lives is prohibited by law in France and Holland, but with us the custom of insuring embraces every object, without exception. This practice is exclaimed against by all foreign writers; and some of our own people have very idly found fault with it.

ON the very same principle that the owner is enabled to lower the freight, and the merchant his commodities, by the indemnification which removes the risk of the voyage; the master and the officers (for it seldom descends to the common men) may undertake a perilous expedition, when they can insure a certain sum on their lives, for the benefit of their families, if they have the misfortune to be lost. But we lay wagers, under the sanction and form of insurance, on the lives of great men at home; it has even been done in the case of state-prisoners; this is a most savage, brutal custom; and I will venture to say, that the statesman who permits it, though but for a day, without using his best endeavours to procure an act of parliament to suppress it, deserves to lose his head.

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THE laws of civil society require, that we should not injure our fellow-subjects; nay, the plain simple laws of nature exacted this, before human governments were instituted. By what title then, do I pretend to alarm the fears of timid age, tottering on the brink of the grave, by giving eighty pounds to receive one hundred, when the wretch tortured with the stone, or with his brain half fired to madness with a raging fever, lies helpless on his couch, and, who has not strength to resent the barbarous insult, shall expire? Perhaps, in an interval of ease, or of returning reason, he amuses himself with a public news-paper; hope hitherto had supported him, it was his pillar of fortitude---but physicians, friends, might flatter; behold the fatal confirmation! his life has been done at eighty in the alley! Terror immediately takes possession of his soul, heightens his disease, and very possibly the next day puts a period to his life. But mark the hardened murderer, who, with impunity, adds these twenty pounds to his ill-gotten store! Thou fool, perhaps this night thy guilty soul shall be required of thee! But if not, this foul deed is registered in heaven, and no angel of mercy shall approach the tablet to expunge the record with a tear of pity, for thou hadst none in thy flinty bosom!

NEED I add how much more dreadful must be the situation of a state-criminal, such as was the unfortunate Admiral Byng? Not all the powers of eloquence could persuade a man in such circumstances, that the vast sums dependent on his being put to death had not some indirect influence on his trial. If it were only a suspicion, sufficient to add to the unhappiness of a criminal, it is inhuman to raise it in his mind; and I must say that this custom is a standing reproach to the British government.

It is reckoned sound policy in France and Holland, not to permit the master or owner to insure to the utmost value of the ship, because it throws a temptation in the way of the owner and the master jointly, or of the latter separately, to sink the ship wilfully. This argument seems very rational; and, after the many instances we have had in England, of the fraudulent destruction of vessels, it is surprizing to find, that owners and masters are still suffered to insure above the value of the bottom.

A SCHOONER entered the port of Ostend in the spring of 1768, whose master was a native of Gibraltar; and, upon information given me under oath, that this man had formerly fled from London to Dunkirk, to avoid a prosecution in the admiralty court, on suspicion of having sunk a ship he commanded at that time, I determined to visit the vessel of which he was now master and sole owner. Six British masters accompanied me, who found her to be French-built, declared her to be a coffin, and added, that she was only fit to sink. On further enquiry I found, that he had bought her at Dunkirk for two hundred and fifty pounds, and insured her at London for five hundred pounds. These impositions being so common, one would imagine insurers would take more care to have the bottoms they insure properly surveyed. The owner ought always to run the risk of one tenth of the value, to prevent frauds.

IT has been the subject of great contests in the mercantile world, Whether it is right to insure an enemy's ships and merchandize in time of war?

THOSE who plead for the affirmative pretend, that it is idle to make laws to prevent a transaction which may be carried on by means of a written correspondence; and that, even if such prohibitions could put a stop to the practice, it would be highly impolitic to lay such a restraint on the commerce of insurance, which produces a certain profit.

BUT, in answer to this, I must beg leave to observe, that the practice gives the enemy all the advantages of the principle of insurance, and defeats the first principle of war with respect to the insurers.

IF commerce is the source of maritime power, and it is the first principle of war to weaken and destroy that power in your enemies, undoubtedly you are guilty of the greatest possible folly and madness, if you render the commerce of your enemy secure, and give her new sources of maritime power *. Besides, if money is the soul of war,
it

* By our insurances the French diminish the amount of the distress and ruin which they would otherwise incur; for if, out of every hundred of their merchants, eighteen are absolutely ruined, and eighty-two escape with considerable gains, there will be a greater quantity

it may be more advantageous to your enemy to be paid ready money for ship and cargo, when taken, by means of insurance, than to wait the slow return of the merchants to whom the cargo was consigned, had it arrived in safety.

SUPPOSING your insurers to be considerable gainers, you must be sensible this must be a branch of commerce conducted on false principles; for individuals would gain, while the nation suffered by having the hands of her enemy strengthened.

BUT if the naval power of the insurers is superior to that of the insured, it is most likely that the insurers would lose by this illicit commerce with the enemy; and thus what the superior naval strength of our country gained on the one side, would be thrown away by the merchant-insurers on the other. Upon the whole therefore, we must highly approve the act of the British parliament, made during the war of 1744, to prevent insuring the enemy's ships and merchandize.

IT should be an invariable maxim to carry on the business of insurance by incorporated companies, known to have a certain considerable joint fund, sufficient to enable them to answer the demands that may be made on them for extraordinary, as well as ordinary losses. We have two such companies in London, the ROYAL EXCHANGE, and the LONDON ASSURANCE, which were incorporated by statute of 6 Geo. I. c. 18.

quantity of distress upon the whole, than if all the hundred are fined according to their abilities. In one case, you see absolute ruin to many, and terror to the whole; in the other case, neither ruin nor terror, but a general frugal security.

The business in war is to use every advantage and superiority to distress your adversary, though perhaps you may awaken him thereby to a new future attention to his interest in a particular article; for you are to be supposed to acquire such power by using your present advantages, as to force him to yield to you at once, more than you can expect to obtain in futurity, by leaving his negligence unroused. Thus, if at present, by refusing to insure the French, we should force them into a distress, which might oblige them to sue for peace only three months sooner than they would do otherwise, our advantage from thence, in the saving of expence only, would be greater than the present value of our profit by insuring them *in infinitum*; not to mention our advantage otherwise, in the increase of our own, by the ruin of their commerce.

Essay towards deciding the important Question, Whether it be a National Advantage to Great Britain to insure the Ships of her Enemies. London, 1747.

and each of them raised the sum of 1,500,000 l. by the sale of shares, which, together with the profits made by these corporations since, independent of the dividends they have made to the proprietors, form a secure and adequate capital, on which those who insure with these companies may firmly rely. But as the law of the land does not prevent private insurers from underwriting sums to any amount, I think it a duty I owe the public, to assign my reasons for giving the preference to these two companies.

PRIVATE underwriters of policies of insurance are for the most part men of the first reputation and fortunes in the city of London; but they are most commonly merchants, and as such liable to the various accidents attendant on commercial transactions, which, notwithstanding all the precaution and foresight of human wisdom, will sometimes miscarry. Indeed it very seldom happens that underwriters fail; but if we could produce only one instance since the year 1720, when these companies were established, it would be sufficient to justify my recommending insurance with companies, in preference to private insurance; but, unfortunately for the insured, if it were necessary, I could produce two in every year upon an average, which, in the space of fifty years, makes one hundred failures of private insurers.

THE principle on which insurance turns is, the absolute security of every commercial adventurer by sea. Now, nothing can be more absurd, than for a man to pay a premium to assure him from the consequences of the dangers of the sea, and afterwards to have that security fail him.

THOUGH it is not to be expected in human affairs, that an impossibility of breaking a contract should make part of its conditions, yet, in the business of insurance, I presume to say, that it ought to exceed the bounds of probability. Let not therefore the most respectable merchant consider this maxim in an unfavourable light; the author looks up with veneration to the character of a reputable British merchant; but truth knows no distinction of persons or rank, when her sacred oracles are to be put in one scale, and the highest degree of human credit and dignity in the other.

EXCHANGES,

EXCHANGES, public credit, circulation of money, and banks, would follow next in the order of our Elements of Commerce; but these I must necessarily incorporate into the Elements of Finances, to avoid tautology and prolixity.

HAVING therefore closed the general elements of commerce, I shall proceed to give a sketch of the true balance of trade; after which I shall treat of the administration of commerce separately, and then conclude this division of my work with the outlines of the education, accomplishments, and character of a British merchant.

ON THE BALANCE OF COMMERCE.

I KNOW not any subject upon which commercial writers have bestowed so much pains to so little purpose.

THE earliest author of any note on this intricate point is Sir Josiah Child, from whom I think it necessary to quote the following observations.

“ THE balance of trade is commonly understood two ways. First, generally, Something whereby it may be known whether this kingdom gaineth or loseth by foreign trade. Secondly, particularly, Something whereby we may know by what trades the kingdom gains, and by what it loseth.

“ FOR the first of these, it is the most general received opinion, and that not ill grounded, that this balance is to be taken by a strict scrutiny of what proportion the value of the commodities exported out of the kingdom bear to those imported; and if the exports exceed the imports, it is concluded the nation gets by the general course of its trade, it being supposed that the overplus is imported in bullion, and so adds to the treasure of this kingdom; gold and silver being taken for the measure and standard of riches.”

A MODERN writer, whom we have frequently mentioned, has stated the balance of trade nearly in the same terms*.

* IF, upon the whole of our traffic, we export to a greater value than we import, the balance will be in our favour to the amount of the difference. If we import more than we export, the balance will be against us to the amount of the difference.

Considerations on the Commerce, &c. of the Kingdom.

BOTH

BOTH Child and Cary recommend the Custom-house books as the only method of ascertaining this surplus value of the exports; yet they agree in acknowledging the fallacy of the Custom-house entries, and the utter impossibility of getting at the amount of the contraband trade, or smuggling, which ought however to be taken into the general balance. Cary likewise, falls into the old error of reckoning the balance of trade by the increase of bullion. Mun is another writer who recommends a reference to the Custom-house books, as a means of striking this balance. But, notwithstanding all our care and attention, it will be found extremely difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a true account both with respect to quantity and value of the merchandize exported from, and imported into Great Britain, for the following reasons.

I. BECAUSE many goods are over-rated outwards, and under-rated inwards.

II. ON account of surplus-entries some merchants entering double what they intend to ship off, to blind and prevent others from sending the like commodities to the same market.

III. BECAUSE prodigious quantities of fine commodities, which are not bulky, are clandestinely imported to a considerable amount, and Flanders fine lace is permitted to come by the post.

IV. BECAUSE neither the profits we make by the freight of our ships, nor the rates for which our manufactures are sold abroad, nor the produce of our colonies, re-exported from home to foreigners, are to be found in the Custom-house books, or to be got at by any other means.

V. BECAUSE we have no general account of accidents that diminish the stock sent out; such as, losses by sea, bad markets, foreign bankruptcies, confiscations, and captures in time of war.

BUT we have another difficulty still to encounter on the subject of striking a general balance of commerce.

I DENY the truth of the maxim advanced by all these authors, and affirm, that the rule they give us for judging of the balance is false.

NEITHER the surplus value of the exports to the imports, nor yet the

the increase of bullion, are the true criterions by which we are to determine that the general balance is in our favour. On the contrary, the imports for seven years successively may be to a much greater amount than the exports; and the quantity of bullion, nay, of coin, may have kept diminishing all this time, and yet the general balance of commerce may have been every year in our favour.

THIS is my hypothesis; it is new, and may appear singular; but I hope it will not be found the less true, and I mean to prove it to your satisfaction.

By a calculation made in the year 1723, I find that we were supposed to pay a balance to Norway, over and above the value of our exports to that country, amounting to

		£. 130,000,
To Sweden,	-	- 240,000,
To Russia,	-	- 400,000,
Total,	-	£. 770,000.

THE greatest part of this sum was for timber, iron, pitch, tar, and other naval stores. I must take the liberty to bring this account on to the time when the encouragement given to our plantations on the continent of America began to operate, and consequently our dependence on the above foreign countries, for these necessary articles, purchased at exorbitant rates, began to decline yearly.

IF I had any later calculations by me, I would not take this method, which, however, can make no difference in the illustration of my hypothesis.

WE will suppose, that, from the year 1749 to 1759, we continued importing quantities of naval stores to be laid up in the dock-yards, or for immediate use, which made the general balance of the amount of the imports exceed considerably the amount of all our exports, and that some of our bullion had been sent out to pay the balance, which had likewise diminished that; upon this state of the case, according to our authors, the balance of trade would have been against us for ten years. But, according to my system, it would have been considerably
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in our favour; for, in the course of the next ten years, we should require little or no supplies from the countries above mentioned, or at least less than the amount of our exports to them; and we should have a valuable stock in hand of useful imports on advantageous terms.

THE flourishing state of our colonies of late years has converted this supposed case into a real one; the imports from Sweden, Norway, and Russia, are considerably diminished; and, in proportion as the plantations continue increasing the cultivation of hemp and flax, they will be still more on the decline.

BUT so great are the imports from America and from India for re-exportation, that if one of these writers was to attempt to draw the balance in his way, he might make it against us for two or three years, if he only considered the state of our bullion, and did not look into our warehouses filled with valuable stock for home-consumption, for the use of our fleets, and lying by for an advantageous opportunity to be re-exported.

I APPREHEND therefore the best way to form a rational conjecture concerning the general balance, as we cannot bring it to a certainty, is, to enquire into the nature of the universal commerce we carry on to all quarters of the globe.

WITH this view I introduce here the most concise and accurate sketch I could procure of each respectively.

No one will dispute the balance of trade to be totally in our favour with respect to our colonies and the East Indies, nor yet that they are the source of our successful commerce with other parts of the globe. To attempt to give exact estimates of this balance would involve us in the intricacies of arithmetical calculations, and at last leave us in a state of uncertainty; because the accounts taken from the Custom-house books, as we observed before, are fallacious. I shall therefore content myself with what I find already in print on this head, in a pamphlet most assuredly written under the direction of that able financier, the late right honourable George Grenville, who, setting aside his great error in taxing the North American colonies, was one of the most honest and enlightened ministers of the age.

IN

IN 1765, the exports to New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina, amounted to £. 1,914,949 *.

THE imports from the same places I have collated, and carefully cast up, from Guthrie's Geographical, Historical, and Commercial Grammar, a most excellent work †, on which I can the more safely rely, because I find the exports agree with Mr. Grenville's account, who, we may be assured, spared no pains or expence to come as near the truth as possible. The imports from these colonies, upon an average of three years, amount to £. 3,179,000.

HERE again, according to the old way of calculating, the balance is against us to the amount of £. 1,264,051; but, upon my principle, all this excess of the imports beyond the exports is a real balance in our favour, as it consists of stock in raw materials for our manufactures, or in commodities, such for instance as tobacco, rice, sugar, and rum, proper for re-exportation; by which means a fresh quantity of shipping and of seamen are employed, to the increase of our navigation.

THUS, we see that these colonies, without reckoning our West India islands, are worth more to us than the East India commerce, even with the benefits said to accrue from the revenue of Bengal, which, according to the account of the author of the Comparison, do not exceed £. 1,300,000.

THE balance in our favour from the West India settlements has never been properly computed; no account is given in the State of the Nation, nor in Guthrie, of the exports and imports; but I will venture to affirm, on probable conjecture, that the commercial advantages derived from them cannot be estimated at less than £. 1,000,000 per annum.

LET us now review the state of our commerce nearer home, within the boundaries of Europe.

IN 1766, our exports to Sweden amounted to £. 59,678, and our imports to £. 195,499. The decrease of the imports, we may observe,

* Present State of the Nation. London, printed for J. Almon, 1768.

† London, printed for J. Knox, 1771.

is very considerable, and in proportion as our colonies find encouragement to supply us with pitch, tar, iron, and timber, they will dwindle away to a very moderate sum, comparatively to what it stood in the year 1766. But as the Swedes take from us a considerable quantity of our manufactures, and likewise of the products of our colonies, we should not wish totally to annihilate this branch of commerce.

In the same year, the exports to Russia amounted to £. 109,900; and the imports from thence to £. 684,585. The cultivation of hemp and flax in our American colonies will lessen this balance every year. But the vast importance and extent of our linen manufactures should make us consider this balance, seemingly against us, greatly in our favour; for though it is paid in specie, yet without a regular supply of hemp and flax, and of flax-feed, our linen manufactures would grow both scarce and dear, and this valuable branch of trade would soon decline. It is therefore our interest to pay this balance, till our colonies can supply us with the full quantities we want of these raw materials. We have besides a political consideration to combine with our commercial interest respecting Russia; we find in her, a powerful ally, embarked in the same cause, the preservation of the liberties and tranquillity of Europe.

Our exports to Spain the same year amounted to £. 1,078,731; our imports from that country to only £. 558,002. Here we have a balance in our favour, in specie, amounting to £. 520,729, and, in my humble opinion, a solution to the high stile assumed by the court of Spain upon occasion of the late disputes about Falkland's island; and though some may find it their interest to clamour perpetually for a Spanish war, the cool and dispassionate must be sensible, that we shall gain more in a course of years by commerce, than even by a successful war with this nation.

In our commerce with Portugal, I find so great a difference between the years 1764 and 1766, that I must notice it.

In 1764 our exports to Portugal amounted to £. 1,266,998; and our imports from that country to £. 312,974: the difference in our

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favour

favour was £. 954,024. An immense sum for Great Britain to receive in specie upon the balance of her commerce with any foreign power, not dependent upon her.

IN 1766, the exports were only £. 667,104, and the imports £. 347,806; so that the balance that year was only £. 319,298 in our favour; and I am informed from good authority, that it has been still less every year since that period. The complaints of the British merchants trading to, and of the British factors residing in Portugal, have been very loud, and urged very home. Every diminution of any valuable branch of commerce should be considered as a jewel lost out of the imperial diadem of Britain, and should arouse the attention of administration to study the means of recovering and replacing it. But this matter belonging properly to the ministerial department, shall be resumed under the next head, when treating of the administration of commercial affairs.

OUR commerce with Portugal is very beneficial, and the balance most assuredly is still considerably in our favour.

OUR exports to Holland, in 1766, amounted to £. 1,602,924, and our imports from thence to only £. 374,587. Here again we have a balance of £. 1,228,337 in our favour. But since the exportation of corn has been prohibited, it must have diminished more than one half. Some writers would likewise deduct the annual interest we pay the Dutch, for the large property they have in our funds: but with no shadow of reason, while we make ten per cent in trade of the money borrowed of foreigners at four.

IN the same year, our exports to Germany amounted to £. 1,811,268, and our imports from that country to only £. 633,672; making another balance of above one million in favour of Great Britain.

I WISH every sensible Briton, who is led away by false notions of national honour, would but meditate on this outline of the beneficial commerce we carry on with the powers with whom the factious, the selfish, and the rash part of our fellow-subjects wish us to go to war upon points of little importance.

WITH Flanders we carry on a little commerce, which, since
cambricks

cambricks have been prohibited, and our linen manufactures have surpassed theirs, is wholly in our favour, and the balance paid in specie.

To Turkey and Italy I apprehend we pay a small balance in specie; but it is for unmanufactured commodities, proper for the use of our home-fabricks; raw and thrown silk being the chief articles.

To Denmark, Norway, Poland, and Hamburgh, we likewise pay a balance; to the two first very impolitically, for deal-boards, timber, and iron, which we might have from our colonies, or even at home, if the growth of timber, both oak and fir, was properly encouraged.

BUT the commerce most highly detrimental to this country in time of peace, is that with France, both legal, and clandestine. I know not any one article we import from that country of real utility either for home-consumption or re-exportation; yet so blinded are we by fashion and luxury, that we strengthen the hands of our natural enemies and rivals in commerce, the instant we have terminated a war which has cost us sixty or seventy millions sterling, by wearing their manufactures, and preferring them to our own; and, finally, to complete our folly, government, though the road has been chalked out by their consuls resident on the Flemish coasts, will not exert itself to suppress a contraband trade carried on from Zealand, from Austrian and French Flanders, and the coasts of France, which robs her revenue of one million annually, and drains her of another in specie.

UPON the whole, we may clearly perceive, that the extensive commerce of Great Britain is actually at this time on a most advantageous footing; but, at the same time, we must be sensible, that there are many things to rectify in the internal direction of commercial affairs at home, in order to secure and preserve this prosperity, and to prevent a fatal reverse, which, whenever it happens, must produce a dreadful revolution in the political state of Great Britain. It will therefore be proper to shew on what principles the administration of

188 **ELEMENTS OF COMMERCE.**

our inland trade and universal commerce should be conducted ; and, in doing this, I shall, of course, fulfil a promise made in the preceding pages ; for a recapitulation of my subject will be indispensably necessary.

ON

O N T H E

ADMINISTRATION OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the apparent prosperous state of the commerce of Great Britain, necessity obliges me to point out sundry defects in the conduct of our rulers, which strike at the root of some of its first principles, and make it nearly amount to a miracle, that we still hold the rank of the first commercial nation in Europe.

By stating generally, the regulations which are wanting to perfect the internal direction of an extensive commerce, we shall be enabled to deduce our capital errors, and to convey useful hints to government, not unaccompanied with some necessary reprehensions.

THE celebrated French ministers, the DUKE OF SULLY, and Monsieur COLBERT : that most excellent French writer, MONTESQUIEU, and the latest British author we have on the subject, Sir JAMES STEUART, all agree in establishing this invariable maxim,

THAT the encouragement of agriculture should be the first object of the statesman who has the lead in the administration of the public concerns of a great, commercial people.

AND the same authors maintain, that there are two kinds of agriculture; the one founded upon true, and the other on false principles.

AGRICULTURE in England is at present proceeding rapidly on false principles, and undermining our manufactures, our inland trade, and some beneficial branches of our universal commerce.

MONTESQUIEU very justly observes, that lands laid down for pasture will always be thinly peopled, because of the few hands required to manage

manage them; whereas corn-lands employ much greater numbers to cultivate them.

A FARM that requires ten horses and four servants to till it for corn, if the grounds are thrown into grass, may be managed with one servant and two horses. Need any thing more be urged to prove, that the increase of our pasture lands diminishes the number of our husbandmen in the proportion of three out of four, upon every such farm so converted to pasturage? Now let us examine the motive to this prevailing evil; this is no other than increased rents, to answer the purposes of luxurious living. The farm employed in raising corn will produce a surplus of forty pounds per annum; but by turning it to grass, at the end of the year, I find the surplus raised to fifty pounds. Avarice and prodigality will equally seize on such an advantage; and unless government interferes, we shall hear no more of that advantageous branch of commerce, the exportation of corn, for which we have received such amazing balances in specie from Holland and other countries, nor will our industrious poor ever eat bread again on moderate terms.

If therefore an able minister, who aspires to lasting popularity, would take this cause in hand, he would receive the acclamations of a grateful people; and, in this case, he might make use of his influence, his ministerial majority in the House of Commons, laudably; the life-guard of ministerial power might here be usefully employed; the corps of pensioners and placemen, forming a majority, might deliver us from the tyranny of avaricious, prodigal, or obstinate land-holders, who will not be convinced by sound argument, that the ultimate value of lands depends on commerce; and that the species of agriculture they are so fond of, because it gives a temporary advanced rent, must depopulate the country, and dry up the sources of commerce.

BUT I have advanced so much already on this subject, under the heads of AGRICULTURE and POPULATION, that I will not tire your patience with a repetition of the same subject. On the whole, I believe you will think, that we want a reform in the article of agriculture.

POPULATION and agriculture are so combined, so dependent on each other,

other, that it is hard to separate them. When the first is conducted on false principles, the latter suffers of course. Mankind will multiply in every country where plenty supports the children, without depriving the parents of their necessary subsistence. In a village, where you see none but pasture lands adjoining, you will find a very scanty portion of inhabitants, ragged and poor, barely existing on the milk of their cows, and the vegetables of their gardens. Turn to another, where you see the hearty peasants loading home the corn harvest, and you will find them decently clothed, followed to and from the field by a train of healthy children, and every thing around them bespeaking peace, plenty, and rural felicity.

To procure a native, generous population, is then the next duty of a patriot minister; and for this purpose he must remove all unnatural impediments to the propagation and subsistence of the human species; even morality in such a cause must relax a little, and the illegitimate offspring of the thoughtless clown, who, following nature's impulse, has transgressed against the laws of society, must be taken care of at the expence of the state; but, above all, every restraint should be removed, and the greatest encouragements given to matrimony among the lower classes of the industrious poor. Settlements should be provided for them, by obliging land-holders to erect small cottages, and to let them on moderate terms, with proper portions of land, to young married people.

WITH respect to MANUFACTURES, the honest statesman will have an arduous task to introduce a reform; for, by endeavouring to proportion the prices of wages to the advantages derived from the labour of the industrious poor *, he will raise a hornet's nest about his ears, and will have to combat with mercenary, insolent, and factious masters, who, by half-starving the poor, and afterwards vending their fabrics

* The Dutch give generally more wages to all their manufacturers, by at least twopence in the shilling, than the English. Wherever wages are high, universally throughout the world, it is an infallible evidence of the riches of that country; and wherever wages for labour run low, it is a proof of the poverty of that place.

Child on Trade.

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at an enhanced price above their value, have acquired princely fortunes. To restrain the immoderate consumption of spirituous liquors, and to reform ale-houses throughout the kingdom, is still a more ungrateful task, which for a time cannot fail to irritate a misguided populace, blind to their own interest; and any diminution in the revenue, occasioned by such a patriotic plan, may shake him out of the seat of power. Yet no man can doubt the necessity of enquiring into the conduct of the master-manufacturers, or of taking some measures to better the condition of the workmen.

BUT the two principal reformatations wanted under this head, and which we cannot dispense with, are, first, the reduction or taking off the excises on all materials used for our manufactures, or in any respect useful in the conduct of them; such, for instance, are the excises on soap, candles, leather, &c. Secondly, The taking some method to decrease the number of menial domestic servants, and to throw them back into the manufactories, farms, and villages, that population may be increased, without the dreadful expedient of naturalization.

BUT it will be asked, what minister will be so bold to introduce such innovations, however sensible he may be that they are for the public good? I readily answer, None, unless he is supported by the Crown, and has, at the same time, from his general good character, the confidence of the people. Such a statesman may bring about any beneficial revolution whatever; but he must first be made sensible of the truth of this maxim: "That the present model of administration is by no means suited to the extensive commerce and vast territorial jurisdiction of Great Britain." Such a plan might have done tolerably well in the days of ELIZABETH, when the sun of commerce was just risen; but in its present meridian splendor, we want a good board of trade, or, more properly speaking, an intelligent COUNCIL OF COMMERCE, in almost every county in England, and in every province of our American colonies.

THE statesman who takes the lead in administration, who enjoys the superior confidence of his sovereign, and who means to promote his royal master's glory, and his people's happiness, must absolutely begin
with

with establishing these councils of commerce in all parts of the British empire.

THE wisest commercial states, both monarchical and republican, set him the example. France, Holland, Germany, Denmark, and some others of less note, have their chambers of commerce *.

SIR JOSIAH CHILD observes concerning the Dutch, "That they
 " have, in their greatest councils of state and war, trading merchants
 " that have lived abroad in most parts of the world, who have not
 " only the critical knowledge, but the practical experience of com-
 " merce, by whom laws and orders are contrived, and peaces with
 " foreign princes projected, to the great advantage of their trade."
 And CARY, a more modern writer, recommends it to the consideration
 of parliament to appoint standing committees of trade, composed of
 men well versed therein, whose sole business it should be to consider
 the state thereof, and to find out ways to improve it. He adds,
 " Great care must be taken, that these committees be not filled up
 " with such who know nothing of the business, and thereby this
 " excellent institution become only a matter of form and expence.
 " In the management of things of much less moment, we employ such
 " who are supposed to understand what they undertake. Trade requires
 " as much policy as matters of state, and can never be kept in a regular
 " motion by accident; when the frame of it is out of order, we know
 " not where to begin to mend it, for want of a set of experienced
 " builders, ready to receive applications, and able to judge where the
 " defect lies."

* IT is true, we have a board of trade, but it takes no immediate cognizance of the commerce of the kingdom; so that it may properly be considered, as indeed it is commonly called, a Plantation Office; and that almost merely too for political use. In France there is an active and well informed council of commerce. In Holland the principal merchants have a great share in the government of the country. Here we appear to be all adrift in commercial matters, without pilot or compass, driving before the wind of accident, amidst quick-sands and rocks; so that if we long escape shipwreck, we shall have wonderful good fortune.

Considerations on the Commerce, Policy, and Circumstances of this Kingdom.

IF only one council of commerce in this kingdom, and another in each of the American colonies, had subsisted on this plan, we should never have heard of the stamp act, nor of some other acts of parliament still unrepealed, which injured commerce to a very high degree, the instant they were made. Such, amongst others, was the act of the ninth and tenth of William III. for the more effectual preventing the importation of bone lace, which caused a prohibition of British woollen cloths (our staple manufacture) in Flanders, and obliged the same parliament, in the next session, to repeal the act conditionally, viz. three months after the prohibition on our cloths should be taken off. This was accordingly done ; but, by a subsequent act, the duties on those laces, as I have before remarked, were made so high, that, by way of reprisal, duties were laid on our woollen cloths and stuffs, by the Flemish government, which destroyed above two thirds of this valuable branch of commerce.

IN short, as Cary says, "Parliaments have very often made commercial matters worse than they found them;" one reason of which is, that the regulations of trade require more time to look into their distant consequences, than one or two sessions : another is, that the study of the theory of commerce is not made a part of the education of youth, who are likely to become British senators. The late worthy Sir JOHN BERNARD used frequently to complain of this in the House of Commons, and to tell our fine gentlemen, that they did not know so much of the matter before them (when the subject was commercial) as school-boys and young apprentices. Without any reflection on the members of the present Board of Trade in particular, I must add, that the same might be said of the lists of the members of it for twenty years back, or more ; they ever were, and they now are, gentlemen promoted to those places by court interest, but whose education has been as foreign from all ideas of commerce, as from the Mahometan religion.

THE expediency of instituting councils of commerce, needs no further proof ; it rests on the best authorities, ancient and modern.

THE good effects of such an establishment may be deduced from the various duties of their office, which I shall briefly point out; and from hence likewise shall discover the defectiveness of the present system of government, with respect to commerce.

1. IT would be the business of the chambers of commerce, in the counties of this kingdom, to make reports, every three months at least, of the state of agriculture, population and manufactures, to the grand council of commerce at London. The members of these provincial chambers being elected annually, by the freemen of corporate towns, from the principal traders residing in the respective counties, it would be their interest, as well as their duty, to mark any decline in agriculture, any symptoms of depopulation, any discouragement of manufactures, or any impediment to the general circulation of inland trade. No ingrossing of farms; no razing of cottages; no monopolizing of provisions; no oppressions of the poor, working manufacturer, by low wages; in a country where high wages are the proof of riches and commercial prosperity; no combinations of workmen to prescribe illegal conditions to their masters; no frauds in the quantity or quality of manufactures could remain long unconcealed or unredressed, if such institutions were general; the elections impartial; and the helm of government steered by an honest, discerning statesman.

2. IN sea-port towns, these commercial juries would report any visible diminution in the number and tonnage of shipping usually trading to or from each respective port; they would watch over the increase or decrease of those useful subjects, British seamen; they would remonstrate on exorbitant port duties, which frequently occasion a diminution of foreign navigation to our ports; they would petition for redress of the tedious, perplexing mode of paying the Custom-house duties; they would notice when any merchandize usually exported to the benefit of the commerce of this realm ceased, and point out the method of restoring it; they would present, as great grievances, all impolitic importations of articles of costly, effeminate luxury, from countries which do not consume any of our native products, or manufactures;

nufactures; they would effectually destroy smuggling, by their vigilance and activity in discovering the clandestine importers, the venders, and the fraudulent purchasers (a most easy task, if the Treasury would part with only trifling sums, in comparison of what is idly lavished on worse accounts; to encourage the suppression of all contraband trade); in fine, they would make a proper representation to government of the oppressive excises on materials used in the mechanic arts and manufactures, which necessarily enhance their value at foreign markets.

3. THEY would frame a concise, complete mercantile code, or body of commercial laws, reforming those statutes which were well adapted to the infant state of our trade, but which are by no means suited to the present extensive commerce of Great Britain. This code once digested, approved by the majority of the chambers of commerce in the kingdom, ratified by the grand council at London, and legalised by act of parliament, would enable the different chambers to exercise a judicial authority, and to terminate mercantile disputes in a summary way, as is practised in France, and other countries *.

4. THEY would most assuredly devise some means of employing the poor; of obliging the robust to follow a life of honest industry; and of punishing the idle and dissolute, in the first instance, to prevent their becoming criminals, which should be the first object of the police †.

5. THEY would alter the mode of satisfaction to be given by insolvent debtors to their creditors; they would not be so absurd as to shut up in prisons, at the will of the latter, a number of useful, laborious seamen, mechanics, manufacturers and tradesmen; most of whom, if not all, might be employed in their several branches, partly for the benefit of

* In this opinion of a commercial or court merchant in every county, for deciding the ordinary contests in trade, without carrying them into the common law-courts, I am supported by the authorities of Child, Cary, Mun, Postlethwayte, and others, who all declare it to be an establishment much wanted in England.

† On this subject see Mr. Young's account of the industry-houses at Ipswich; and Cary's account of the management of the poor at Bristol.

their creditors, and partly for the support of their families, if a law were enacted to punish the wilful idleness of insolvent debtors; and to execute them as felons, if they ran away from their usual place of residence and employment, before they had paid a reasonable composition for their debts, in proper portions, from the fruits of their industry, or ingenuity.

THE confinement of vast numbers of useful hands in prisons for debt, is one of the most inhuman, unmanly and impolitic steps, that even disgraced a people asserting a spirit of liberty.

AN absolute power is given, in a free country, to one individual, over the person of another: in England---the land of freedom!---if he sinks under the weight of this arbitrary power---if he dies---no inquisition is made for his blood. The king was not his creditor, yet he quietly acquiesces in the loss of a subject, who might contribute to agriculture, population, manufactures, trade, navigation, or the defence of the state.

UNDER many despotic governments (very near us) whose laws we affect to treat with contempt, but whose frivolous manners we idolize, no such tyranny is permitted.

WE loudly boast that we hate, detest, abhor the idea of slavery!---Yet is there a greater slave under the canopy of Heaven, than an English debtor lying in prison (totally insolvent) at the mercy of his creditor!

ALL civil governments founded for the happiness of mankind, lay it down as a maxim---

THAT the interest, convenience, and often, even the ease of individuals, must be sacrificed to the public good: admit this principle; and then, tell me, how the British government can allow the locking up so many useful members of society yearly, for debt.

I TAKE up this subject in a political and commercial light; but as I am sensible numbers will object that credit would be at a stand, and the course of trade impeded, if debtors were not punishable for failures--I must beg leave to observe, that, there are various modes and degrees of punishment, which should always be proportioned (in affairs of property)

property) to the injury done to individuals; but society should have a power of reclaiming its public share of the person of every one of its members; no punishment therefore, to be inflicted by an individual, for an injury (not made a capital crime by law) should extend to depriving the state of the utility of a subject.

6. THEY would most strenuously recommend an alteration in our criminal laws, more favourable to humanity and to the interests of a trading nation than those now subsisting, which are a disgrace to the British constitution and government.

THE taking away so many lives by public executions, is highly impolitic, if not unjustifiable---Where robberies are attended with horrid circumstances, such as breaking open inhabited houses in the dead of night, and spreading terror and alarm through a family, to the endangering of life; the punishment ought to be capital. But in cases of simple theft and robbery, I humbly apprehend, that neither a government, professing the Christian religion, nor individuals are justifiable in taking away the life of a fellow creature, who might live to make restitution to the injured party (which, when property is invaded, is the utmost we have a right to require) and to become a useful reformed member of the community.

IT is with reluctance I observe in this place, that the false notions which prevail in England with respect to LIBERTY and SLAVERY prevent a number of salutary improvements in the police of the state. No minister can be found hardy enough to propose any important alterations in our laws, which wear an unpopular aspect, though the preservation of the lives of the common people should be the beneficial object of such changes. The same populace, that will make an holiday and a matter of pastime of an execution at Tyburn, would exclaim, that we had lost our liberty and were sold to slavery, if they were to see a number of felons condemned to labour on the highways, or in our mines, or in digging navigable canals with large clogs or fetters to their legs, for three, four or seven years, according to their crimes. It has been proposed to government; and I imagine, has failed of being adopted,

adopted, from the cause just mentioned *. Yet certainly this would be a more humane and politic punishment, than that of death or transportation.

WE know that shame has often a more powerful effect on the human mind, than fear; and I am apt to think, that the public exposure of criminals, in the quality of slaves, for any given number of years, would be a more instructive example to persons wickedly inclined, than fifty executions; and as to the criminals themselves, there can be no doubt of their being reformed by such a long public exposure to the eyes of their honest countrymen.

7. THEY would advise a law to be enacted, without loss of time, for the establishment of marine societies, in every capital town and sea-port in England, not only for the reception of boys, who after having been idle, profligate, abandoned wretches, take to the sea-faring life as their last resource; but for maintaining and educating a certain number from early youth for the sea-service; as well knowing that the strength of the British empire depends on having a sufficient quantity of able seamen always ready to man our fleets, and to navigate merchant-ships, without having recourse to that savage custom of pressing seamen; a custom which renders us unworthy of the character of a civilized nation.

AND in order that the boys might join practice to theory, they would recommend the encouragement of fisheries on our coasts to the utmost extent.

* OUR general notions of the galleys abroad, are wrong; in some parts, felons are (literally speaking) chained down to oars on board of galleys; but in several others, the term has been engrafted into their criminal sentences, without any reference to the literal meaning of it. In Flanders, to sentence a man to the galleys for a number of years, is to put a heavy log of oak to one of his legs, fastened above the ankle, by an iron fetter, obliging him to work on the highways, or at any laborious employment the magistracy of the place shall order; and at night making him repair to the prison of the town, for no person will harbour a felon so situated. At the expiration of their time, they often become good, industrious, labouring servants, in distant parts of the same country; for this method seldom fails to make them true penitents; whereas our prisons, transport-vessels, and plantations, harden them in their vicious courses, and few escape the gallows in the long run.

8. To

8. To these chambers of commerce should be referred all memorials of our ministers and consuls abroad, concerning the decline of any branches of commerce carried on from the respective ports in the district of each chamber, to any foreign countries where such officers reside.

I WILL illustrate this proposition by an example. In 1764, while I had the honour to serve the King in the character of Vice-consul for Flanders, the Flemish government suddenly laid a very high additional duty on brute salt, which greatly affected the navigation and commerce of the people of Liverpool to the port of Ostend. If a chamber of commerce had at this time subsisted at Liverpool, the memorial I sent home upon that subject should have been transmitted directly to such chamber of commerce, instead of going to the Secretary of State's office, where its fate was to be neglected, in the multiplicity of more important business, or to be sent to our present flimsy board of trade, to be laid on the shelf*.

FROM the consideration of this subject, I am naturally led to that of treaties of commerce with foreign powers. These we have suffered to be violated in the most shameful manner by every petty state with whom we have formerly had the most beneficial commercial connections; and it is pleaded in excuse, that we have thrown commerce into a new channel, and have as much as we can manage with our colonies. Yet if we allow, as we certainly must, the expediency of appointing public officers to reside at the sea-ports, and in the capitals of foreign countries to which we carry on any branch of commerce, we ought to support them properly in the execution of the duties of their respective offices†.

A SOVEREIGN

* The Danish consul at Ostend is ordered, by his instructions, to correspond with the grand chamber of commerce at Copenhagen upon such occasions.

† In this respect the French greatly surpass us.—They take care to contend for the minutest privileges and immunities accorded to their trading subjects, residing in foreign countries—(whether founded on positive treaties, or on ancient custom, or permission).—

They

A SOVEREIGN dominion, by which I understand a nation of the first rank not dependant on, or tributary to another, may make alterations in the internal administration of their commercial concerns, which indirectly violate their commercial treaties with other nations; and against such changes (in a sovereign state) we have no right to complain, or remonstrate, much less to go to war.

EVERY sovereign state has a right to employ its subjects in the manner it conceives to be most for the public benefit. Thus, for instance, should the Portuguese establish a woollen manufactory, and therefore prohibit the importation of a single yard of English cloth, we might make use of every rational, of every political argument in the course of a ministerial negociation upon the subject; but after all, by the law of nations, we could have no right to declare war against them upon this account: all we could do, would be to retaliate, by prohibiting their wines.

BUT the case is far otherwise with respect to states of the second rank, who have no sovereign authority either as monarchies, or republics, but are only dependencies on some principal head to which they belong. This is the political situation of the Austrian Netherlands, part of the hereditary dominions of the Empress dowager of Germany, the once celebrated queen of Hungary, whose picture was raffled for in every capital town in England; who in the war of 1744 was reduced, as she emphatically expressed it, "to the hazard of not having a town left to lye in;" so closely was she pursued by her enemies the victorious FRENCH and PRUSSIANS. Under those circumstances, whe.

They take care likewise, to protect all their commercial officers, from their consuls down to their courtiers royales, or licensed brokers; and that their persons and characters may be duly respected;—they often resent (in a national manner) the slightest affronts put upon them, in the execution of their office.—The spirited satisfaction they lately demanded and obtained of the Bey of Tunis, shews the genius of the French government in this respect — Our's, on the contrary, often reject, or treat as trifling, the representations of their ministers and consuls; of the infractions of commercial treaties, and oppressions of our trading subjects— and sometimes, dismiss them for diligence, activity and public spirit, if they give too much trouble at home.

the Austrian Netherlands were on the point of falling into the hands of the French, and of being irrecoverably lost to the house of Austria, when she implored the succour of the ENGLISH and the DUTCH, to save these rich provinces. Accordingly, with the aid of millions of English treasure, and the blood of many thousands of our veteran troops, and the further support of a Dutch army, these provinces were preserved to this ungrateful woman.

THE express condition on which these succours were granted was, that the English and Dutch should enjoy the commercial advantages of the barrier treaty of 1715, by which a tariff was settled so very beneficial to the commerce of the English and Dutch, on account of the low duties on their merchandize, that both nations carried on a most profitable trade to the port of Ostend. But in one year after the peace of Aix-la-Chappelle, *viz.* in 1749, when her husband was become emperor of Germany, and all her affairs were settled to her satisfaction, the Flemish council of finances at Brussels began their violations of the barrier-treaty, by imposing very high duties on our woollen manufactures, and they have ever since that period been undermining our valuable commerce to that country; but what is still worse, they have established woollen manufactories all over Flanders, and will be enabled, in a few years, to rival us at all foreign markets; and let it be remembered, that they were the originals in the woollen manufactures, from whom we copied.

NOTHING surely can equal the weak and timid conduct of our government, in suffering this petty state to become once more a manufacturing people: under the stipulations which induced the English and the Dutch to preserve it to the queen of Hungary; they have always had a clear indisputable right to enforce their commercial rights by the sword, if they obstinately persisted to violate them. Instead of which, we have tamely suffered them to take shelter under the wings of France; the same bigotted woman having made an unnatural alliance with that court; and in the next war we have with the French, we shall see a secret article in the treaty of amity and of marriage alliance between the courts of Versailles and Vienna, operate the

the most detrimental effects to Great Britain. The Austrian Netherlands will be ceded to France, as a free gift to the Dauphiness; and the imminent danger to our commerce, of having these provinces in the hands of the French, was demonstrated to our parliament as far back as the year 1743.

BUT in proportion as our commerce in Europe declines, so must our political influence, with the European powers; a circumstance greatly against us, and in favour of France: as therefore we have given the preference to our American commerce, (which was certainly right, but ought not to have induced us to neglect such beneficial concerns as that of our trade to Flanders, the balance of which is entirely in our favour) it is necessary to be the more on our guard against the political combinations of the powers of Europe, who will naturally be allied to those nations that favour their commerce.

A FORMIDABLE maritime force, ever ready to protect our commerce by sea, in all quarters of the globe, is therefore indispensably necessary; and it is the duty of the rulers of this commercial kingdom to keep such a force always fit for immediate service.

BUT in order to this, experienced merchants should be members of the privy-council; and men of great abilities, who have filled ministerial and commercial departments in foreign stations, such as ambassadors and consuls, should be made secretaries of state, especially for the colonies. Then we might expect to see sound, permanent, honourable treaties and conventions, made with foreign powers; and our colonies governed upon the true principles of the British constitution.

THE last grand regulation I shall mention, which might be introduced into trade by an act of the legislature, is, To render book-debts at home, and in our colonies, transferable in as easy and as expeditious a manner, as Bank-annuities. The hint is taken from Sir Josiah Child; and the practical demonstration of its good effects from the states of Venice, Genoa and Holland, where the transfer of book-debts is in common use and general esteem.

CHILD's plan for this purpose is very intricate; mine is quite simple: but it will be proper (before I make it known) to take the

opinion of the trading body of the nation on the principle itself---if no objections are made to it, (after my having advanced it in this public manner as a proposition highly beneficial) I pledge myself to produce it, for the benefit of my fellow-citizens, without fee or reward.

I HUMBLY offer, in support of the proposition, the following observations :

WHOEVER considers seriously the state of commercial credit, will allow, that many a failure happens in this kingdom, owing to a laudable emulation.---Men over-trade themselves---perhaps the nation, as a commercial body, has set the example. For want of remittances from distant countries, a failure ensues---the merchant's effects are seized---fold at an under-value---charged with exorbitant law-expences : the creditors are dissatisfied; the unhappy man is ruined : I am sorry to add---perhaps some competitor, with an over-grown capital, has pushed him---perhaps he has interested himself in the management of his affairs, in the capacity of a creditor, to prevent his ever becoming his rival again in that part of the world. I have such a transaction in my eye, but the parties (two brothers) are dead, and *requiescant in pace*.

Now let us for a moment only suppose, that book-debts were as easily transferred, as Bank-annuities ; would not this be a noble relief to the merchants, factors and manufacturers, who are great exporters, and are obliged to wait the tardy remittances of their correspondents, in remote regions ; might it not very often preserve the credit of a great trader, who otherwise is lost, by stopping payment, though that circumstance arises from a sinister unforeseen event, such as the loss of an homeward bound ship, the failure of correspondents, and various other adventitious misfortunes in traffic.

As to our inland trade, it would be still more advantageous--sharpers and spendthrifts would be extremely cautious how they got into tradesmen's books, if they were uncertain to whom their debts might be assigned, and knew, that the demands on them being made to circulate like bank-notes, must be regularly discharged, at the expiration of the term of credit agreed on.

No

No poor, dependant, tradesman or mechanic, need then be afraid to present his bill (after two, three or four years credit) to some insolent, high-born debauchee; and receive a rude repulse, attended with menaces!

It being a general custom to transfer book-debts, when the demands of the wholesale dealer came upon the retailer, or the wants of his family obliged him to alienate a debt, no exceptions could be made, no umbrage taken, at a universal practice!

PRIVATE credit (so greatly detrimented by the public credit of the funds) would by this measure be restored with security---and if any objection is admissible, it must be to the execution, not to the plan itself---and it can only be deemed impracticable, on account of the present state of our finances.--Great sums of money would be employed to the useful purposes of relieving and supporting the mercantile world, which would otherwise be left in the funds, and stocks of course must fall---for money advanced in this way, would bear five *per cent.* interest.

PERMIT me to add a few words in behalf of the poor.

A WELL regulated system of police with respect to the poor, is much wanting.

No less a sum than 2,500,000 £. is annually collected for the relief of the poor; yet the poor are neither maintained, nor properly employed. In the streets of our metropolis they swarm, and are a public reproach to the legislation of the kingdom, and to the magistracy of the capital. At five miles from London, they are continually robbing out-houses and gardens; and at lone houses, where there are no men-servants to oppose them, they are insulting to a degree, which strikes terror and astonishment.

THE following are the principal causes of this growing evil.

1. THE low-bred, interested inhabitants of most parishes, are select vestry-men, and have the lead in parish affairs.

2. Most men (in this free country) consult their own ease; and will not be put to any ill-conveniences, to serve the public, if their purses will excuse them: thus the inferior, magisterial offices, which regard
the

the peace and good order of society, are turned over to deputies taken from the lees of the people; and liable to act in consort with, instead of vigorously executing the laws against vagrants.

THE office of constable particularly, should always be in the hands of a well educated, sober, substantial citizen---in this case, they would be a check on the ignorance, insolence and venality of trading justices. According to Dalton, c. 28, "He ought to be of the abler sort of parishioners; and if a very ignorant, or poor person be chosen, he may, by law, be discharged, and an abler person placed in his room."---A nocturnal visit to any of our watch-houses will convince the curious observer, that drunken beaules of parishes, who make a practice of serving the office, for the abler well informed opulent parishioners, are not the proper officers the law intended to entrust with the peace and security of society.

Is it sufficient for an overseer to give vagrants two or three shillings; or for a justice to sign a pass?---Should not care be taken to punish them, if they do not prosecute their journeys to the respective places where they belong?

SHOULD not they be sent (under the care of a proper officer) to the public hospitals, to be examined by the surgeons, as to the condition of their bodies, that neither improper spectacles may be presented to the eyes of pregnant women in our streets, nor the humane be imposed on by artifice---in a word, that they may be enforced to honest industry, if they are found to be healthy and able?

What is it causes a want of hands, and evident signs of depopulation in many country places, while, in time of peace, the capital swarms with beggars and thieves? What! but a total neglect of those salutary laws, which were made for the punishment of idleness and debauchery; and our ill-judged prejudices, in favour of all English institutions and regulations, to the utter rejection of every wise system of police in neighbouring commercial countries.

So various have been the remedies proposed on this head, which have all failed of success, that I shall not add to them, because I am aware, that the increase of the public revenues depending on the consumption

sumption of exciseable liquors, is a manifest cause, of conniving at the profligacy, idleness and intemperance of the lower classes of the people, in, and near our capital towns.

IF it shall appear to any gentleman, that I have omitted any thing material relative to the principles of commerce, which is not taken up in the succeeding treatise on the Elements of POLITICS and FINANCES, or that I have been guilty of any misrepresentations of my subject, I shall esteem it as a favour to be better informed---and must now beg leave to conclude, nearly in the words of Mr. Thomas Mun, formerly a merchant of London, whose treatise, entitled, England's Treasure by Foreign Trade, was first published in 1664.

“THE balance of our foreign trade, is the rule of our treasure”---there cannot therefore be a more beneficial study in this country, than the commercial art---by skill in which, we may continually increase this balance “now considerably in our favour.”

CONCLUSION.

C O N C L U S I O N .

S K E T C H

O F T H E

EDUCATION, ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHARACTER

O F

A B R I T I S H M E R C H A N T .

TH E antiquity of the free profession of a merchant may justly entitle it to claim precedency to nobility of birth, and all hereditary or created dignities conferred on men, by emperors or kings; for there were eminent merchants in the world long before there were any nobles, or titled gentry. But, in the early ages of commerce, the rank and profession of a merchant was neither so well understood, nor so clearly distinguished from that of simple inland traders, or shop-keepers, as it has been in modern times.

At present, to use the elegant expression of a celebrated commercial writer, the merchant is happily called, "The steward of the kingdom's stock, by way of commerce with other nations*." *None therefore, in Great Britain, can properly be stiled merchants, but such as export her native products and manufactures to foreign climes, or import the commodities of different countries into this realm.* To this general acceptance of the word Merchant, I shall strictly adhere, that we may not confound the rank and character of the British

* See Mun's English Treasure by Foreign Trade.

merchant with that of a wholesale dealer, or trader; an error which we may be easily led into, if we consult the common directories, and other printed lists of our citizens, whose idle vanity often prompts them to pay some venal printer, a small annual gratification, to be placed in the first class of citizens, when their actual situation in life intitles them only to the second, perhaps not even to that *. And it is the more necessary in this place to mention this distinction, because the education required to accomplish the British merchant, is by no means necessary for the second class of citizens: wholesale traders.

THE first care of parents and guardians, who design to bring up a youth to be a British merchant, should be, to instil into his tender mind the soundest principles of religion and morality, and a sacred veneration for truth; probity should be the basis of all his juvenile actions; nor should he, in his sports and pastimes, ever be suffered to forfeit his word, or evade his promise.

THE early cultivation of his native language is indispensably necessary, and to be preferred to the study of the dead languages. Parents cannot be guilty of a greater folly than to make lads thresh hard at Latin and Greek for ten or twelve years together †, when perhaps they will not have occasion, twice in their lives to speak, read, or write, either of these languages. But the misfortune is, that after a waste of so much time and money, we often see pedantic blockheads come from our famous schools and universities, unqualified for any other professions but those of divinity, law, and physic, because they have never learned to speak, read, or write their native tongue with propriety, taste, and elegance. Considering the brevity of human life, and how early most men appear on the great theatre of the world, it is really amazing, that even four or five years should be allotted to Latin and Greek, which might be so much more beneficially employed, by nine boys out of ten, in acquiring a perfect knowledge of their own copious language, by means of which alone, without any other aid, they might know as

* See Kent's Annual Directory.

† See Mr. Locke, and the Spectators, on Education.

much of ancient learning as is necessary to gratify curiosity, or likely to be generally useful; for all the best ancient authors are translated into English; and as to the arts and sciences, the knowledge of them may be acquired by him, who thoroughly understands his maternal tongue, without studying any other, ancient or modern.

It is indeed an opinion blindly received, and swallowed down from age to age, without examination, "that Latin is necessary to acquire the arts and sciences."

"THERE is, however, no more connection between Latin and science, nor between Latin and any one art, than between English and the same art. Will a man who understands Latin run, or wrestle, or dance, or fence, better than if he knew but English? Will a clock-maker, who knows Latin, finish his work with greater accuracy? Will a commander, who has learned Latin, navigate a vessel to the East or West Indies better than one, who speaks English, French, Dutch, or Spanish?"

"THE knowledge of things, is acquired by thought and attentive observation; and of arts, by practice and experience; and it makes no difference in whatever language either of them is learned or expressed. The finer arts, music, painting, and architecture, might have been invented at first just as well by one who thought and spoke in English, as by one who thought and spoke in Greek or in Latin. They, as well as other arts and sciences, can be taught to greater advantage in English, than in either of the other two."

"ALL the great discoveries in natural philosophy, the true system of astronomy, the theory of gravitation, the various improvements in optics and mechanics, are the productions of modern times*."

THE sensible part of Great Britain therefore, who have turned their thoughts upon right education, especially such as have written upon it, are universally of opinion, that it is much wiser to set youth upon a course of education, every part of which is easily attainable, and of real use in public life, than to torture them with the dead languages.

* See A Plan of an English Grammar-school Education, by James Buchanan. London, printed for E. and C. Dilly, 1770.

And as to a merchant, it is evident he may be perfectly accomplished without the knowledge of them ; but if he thinks proper to study them, let it be at his leisure hours, after he has made himself master of every branch of knowledge requisite for his profession. Should he find himself, by success in commerce, and the favour of his countrymen, likely to become a senator, it will then be time enough for him to sit down and read the Latin prose authors ; and having already attained the elements of languages, he will make more progress in six months, than a boy at school in six years, and fully sufficient to enable him to ornament his speeches with strokes of ancient eloquence, or even to introduce an apposite quotation from the Latin authors. But, as a further proof, that even this knowledge of the Latin tongue is not indispensably necessary, we have only to review the house of commons in the present, or any past parliament, and we shall find, generally speaking, the greatest classical scholars, the best university proficient, are the silent members, or uneloquent speakers in that house.

MR. SHERIDAN, in his plan of British education, observes what has been a general complaint, “ That, instead of preparing each youth
“ for that sphere of life in which he is afterwards to move, all are
“ trained in one and the same course, which fits them for no one
“ employment on earth. A smattering in two dead languages is all
“ that is to be gotten by the present method of education, the art of
“ wrangling, some small knowledge in speculative philosophy, and
“ some crude notions of impenetrable metaphysics*.”

In fine, so necessary is it, in my idea, to undeceive parents and guardians on this subject of the education of youth, not designed for the three learned professions of divinity, law, and physic, and yet so obstinate are the pedantic and self-interested, in recommending the old method of plodding on in Latin and Greek, that I have spared no pains to collate the best authorities in support of my own judgment, and shall conclude the topic with the sanction of one of the most learned, candid, and accomplished gentlemen of the age we

* See British Education, by Thomas Sheridan, A. M. London, printed for R. and J. Doddsley, Pall-mall.

live in. His opinion must have double force, when it is considered, that though a perfect master of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, he has judged it necessary, for the benefit of his country, to sit down and compose an easy, familiar introduction to the English tongue; and to recommend to all persons concerned in the education of British youth, to make a grammatical knowledge of their maternal language, the basis of the study of foreign languages.

“ To enter at once upon the science of grammar, and the study of a foreign language,” says this elegant writer, “ is to encounter two difficulties together, each of which would be much lessened, by being taken separately, and in its proper order. A competent grammatical knowledge of our own language is the true foundation upon which all literature, properly so called, should be raised. If this method were adopted in our schools, children would have some notion of what they are going about, when they should enter into the Latin grammar, and would hardly be engaged so many years as they now are, in that most irksome and difficult part of literature, with so much labour of the memory, and with so little assistance of the understanding.” I shall only add another passage, as a corroborating proof, that a merchant may dispense with the dead languages.

“ THE English language hath been much cultivated during the last two hundred years. It hath been considerably polished and refined, its bounds have been greatly enlarged, its energy, variety, richness, and elegance, have been abundantly proved by numberless trials, in verse and prose, upon all subjects, and in every kind of stile*.”

ON the strength of all these authorities I presume to recommend a grammatical pursuit of the English language from the age of eight to twelve years, during which time, it is to be hoped, a youth, intended to be a merchant, will be able to read, write, and speak with propriety, ease, and elegance, in his native tongue, more especially if he has been in the hands of an able private preceptor. Vulgar arithmetic and

* See A short Introduction to English Grammar, by Dr. Lowth, now bishop of Oxford. London, printed for A. Millar, and T. Cadell, 1767.

writing may share such parts of these four years, as are necessary to enliven study by variety.

THE wholesale dealer or shop-keeper's education may receive the addition of two years further application to writing, to the branch of arithmetic which teaches book-keeping, and to the attainment of the French language, which being almost universally current, may be useful to him in the common course of business, especially as great numbers of foreigners, who converse in French, usually resort to England, in time of peace. A lad thus qualified, is ready, at the age of fourteen, to be an indentured apprentice.

BUT he, who is designed for the comprehensive profession of a British merchant, must range through more extensive fields of science. After attaining a competent knowledge of the French language, he should study the Spanish, which is used in almost all the east, particularly on the coast of Africa, from the Canaries to the cape of Good Hope; the Italian, in use on all the coasts of the Mediterranean, and in many parts of the Levant; and the Teutonic, or German, which is common in almost all the northern countries of the globe.

THE elements of general history, and a thorough knowledge of the chronological, political, and commercial history of his own country, should be his next concern. With these, and the principles of geography and navigation, we may allow him to enlarge and improve his understanding, till he attains the sixteenth year.

THE nature of the consular jurisdiction, and of the laws, manners, and customs of the countries with which Great Britain carries on any considerable commerce, should now occupy part of his attention; and the several commercial institutions, with the use of banks, of bills of exchange, and the rules of circulation, another portion of his time.

HE ought to inform himself accurately in what commodities each trading country abounds, what are the merchandize they demand from other countries, and from what places they receive them.

THE customs, tolls, taxes, excises, convoys, and all other charges upon merchandize exported from, or imported into his own and all foreign countries, should be another principal object for the young merchant.

merchant. The prohibitions laid on various commodities in different nations, he should thoroughly acquaint himself with. The measures, weights and coins of all countries, should be familiar to him.

He should be taught to know on what conditions to freight and insure ships and merchandize; he should also be enabled to form a tolerable judgment of the prices of the several articles used for the building or repairing of ships; and also of the manner of contracting for naval stores and provisions, with the ordinary rates of the wages of mariners.

He ought to acquire great expertness in the mode of transacting business at the Custom-house, and on the quays of the ports of his own country; and, in order to this, I should imagine, no better expedient could be devised, than to obtain leave for young gentlemen, (educating for merchants) to practise under the principal agents for the Custom-house business; or to be received as assistants to the clerks at the Long-room, and in the custom-houses of the out-ports, without fee or reward. Our young merchants being thus initiated, we should hereafter see all those difficulties and perplexities removed, which at present arise from blundering entries, or the over-hurry of the clerks; and these pupils would be a check upon the mal-practices of the inferior officers.

HAVING now brought on our youth to about the eighteenth year, if he has been introduced into a compting-house at home, and has been shewn the general manner of correspondence with foreign merchants, it will be adviseable to finish his education, by sending him for two or three years more on his travels, recommending him at each place where he is to reside a few months, to some considerable merchant, who should be advised to receive him without form or ceremony, on the footing of one of his family; and, so far as is consistent with the necessary secrecy of commercial transactions, to let him assist in his accompting-house, and in his warehouses.

By these means, at the age of majority, or perhaps one year later, he will return completely accomplished to appear on the Royal Exchange of London, with honour and credit to his friends, and true satisfaction to himself; in the respectable character of a British merchant.

SHOULD

SHOULD he then succeed to the house of his ancestors, or be associated with that, or any other capital company, he will be an acquisition to it of inestimable value; while those who are educated in this dissipated metropolis, and comment on the laws of commerce at coffee-houses or taverns, at Mrs. Cornelys', at the New Ranelagh, or in the environs of Covent Garden, exhaust the funds of their fathers, ruin themselves and their partners, and sink down into the tomb of contempt, or oblivion, before they have half finished their mortal career.

A FIRM attachment to the true principles of honour, a religious adherence to his word, clearness and integrity in his contracts, prudent generosity in his dealings with the industrious poor, with a becoming dignity and moral rectitude in his manners, joined to the accomplishments we have recommended, must pave the way to affluence; if most extraordinary misfortunes, such as seldom occur in life, do not prevent it; and opulence will afford the means to support those dignities in the state, which public esteem will not fail to confer, in this free country, on such exalted characters. Our young merchant, therefore, should keep the honours of magistracy, and the important charge of a British legislator, the representative of a free people, constantly in his eye. These should be his CIVIC crowns; and if he can nobly resolve to sacrifice private ease and indulgence to the public good, being seated in the House of Commons, let him there boldly stand forth the intrepid advocate for the free constitution of his country, even in the worst of times. If merit of this cast recommends him to his sovereign, let him aspire to foreign embassies, to ministerial charges in foreign countries, for which he will be so well qualified; and after having rendered his country signal service, by protecting its rights and privileges abroad; if wisdom and integrity steer the helm of government; he may expect to be chosen as assistant-pilot. But if corruption, like a general deluge, overflows his country, let him not quit his honourable seat in parliament; for there is his station, a watchful centinel, to arrest all traitors to the common-weal, of every denomination. And if, under these circumstances, he deserts his post for any honours the court
can

can give; or seeks an inglorious retirement, to avoid the heat of the battle; let him remember, that he is little better than the venal wretches, whom he has suffered to escape with impunity.

HAPPY would it be for this country, if we had more such accomplished merchants as I have described in parliament, and in the great councils of the state. Let this consideration, therefore, excite our British youth, designed for this honourable profession, to follow the plan of education here laid down.

IT is humbly submitted to the parents, and guardians of youth, by the author, who wishes, if it has any defects, they may be pointed out by those, who shall happen to differ from him in opinion; but if approved, he begs leave to observe, that he will cheerfully undertake the first stages of it, for any young gentleman, whose friends may think proper to make application to him for that purpose.

THE

THE
ELEMENTS
OF
POLITICS.

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T H E
E L E M E N T S
O F
P O L I T I C S.

P A R T I.

ICANNOT open this subject more properly than by introducing the following remark of the late celebrated bishop of Cloyne, most truly applicable to the present times. “The discourses and pretensions of
“men throughout these kingdoms, would, at first view, lead us to
“imagine, that all the inhabitants were politicians; and yet perhaps
“political wisdom (so generally professed, and so much talked of) hath
“not in any age or country been less understood. Licence is taken for
“the end of government, and popular humour for its origin; no
“reverence is shewn to the laws, no attachment to the constitution;
“little attention to matters of the utmost importance, and great alter-
“cations upon trifles; to which may be added, an impatience of rule,
“and a contempt of authority:” to complete this portrait of the
times, a wrong definition of politics has been too generally received;
and in all sciences it is acknowledged, that it is better to be totally
ignorant, than to form false conceptions.

POLITICS have been made to stand for superior subtilty and guile;
and to signify fraud and artifice; by means of which misrepresentations,

wrong notions have been formed of ministers and statesmen; and it has been industriously propagated, that a person cannot be a good politician, without being an arrant villain, or an egregious knave: and thus government, which is ever sacred, and probity, which is essential to it, are represented as incompatible things, that cannot subsist together.

THE early study of political wisdom, is therefore essentially necessary for all who have the most distant prospect of filling any office of confidential trust and importance in the state; and I shall endeavour, in the course of this treatise, to point out the utility of this study to every private individual of society, who has the least spark of the *amor patriæ* in his breast, or any property in the world, on which he sets any real value: I shall also convince my readers, that of late years the subjects of Great Britain would have been much happier, and the administration of government much easier, if a false definition of political wisdom had not too generally prevailed, both on the part of the rulers and the ruled, owing to our neglect in not making this important subject one great branch of the education of youth, more especially of the sons of the nobility, the gentry, and the merchants, or citizens of the first class. Instead of this, they are taken raw from school, or the university, and sent abroad, before they have been made acquainted with the political constitutions of the foreign nations it is intended they should visit. Ignorant of the nature of the British constitution, uninformed of the means by which Great Britain has gradually risen to that pre-eminence of power, riches and happiness she now enjoys, unrivalled by any other nation in the known world; they are either carried away by the external appearances of things abroad, and return with prejudices against their native country; or (on their first outset in life) become the easy prey of party leaders; and, as ambition, personal vanity, family-connections, or self-interest bias them, take part with, or oppose the ruling powers of the state.

A LATE writer on education has very sensibly observed, " That one of the principal points which ought to be kept in view by all legislative bodies, in every well regulated state, is, the education of
" young

“ young gentlemen of noble birth and high rank; that their talents
 “ may be so directed and improved, as to qualify them, by a due and
 “ timely exertion of them, for the support of that government of
 “ which they are respectable members.”

BUT the common modes of education pursued in England, are not, by any means, calculated to promote this salutary end: the qualifications necessary to render the nobleman, the gentleman, and the generous CITIZEN, most truly useful to their country, must be drawn from other sources.*

THE theory of commerce we have already shewn to be ONE.---We are now to proceed to the science of POLITICS, which is, of all others, the most useful to young gentlemen of rank and fortune in Great Britain.

THE Elements of Politics might have preceded those of commerce, in point of order, since, though the origin of commerce, and of civil government, may be equally traced to the earliest records of time, yet civil governments must have been formed while commerce was only in its infancy. But two obvious reasons determined me to give the lead to commerce.---In the first place, I found an insuperable timidity prevailing in my mind, with respect to my present subject. It had been told me, that a most respectable statesman (now living) † being asked, when at the zenith of his glory, where he learned politics? replied, “ He picked them up in the streets.”---Some asserted, that it was so idle, so vague, and so disgusting a subject, that I should never be able to fix the attention of either auditors or readers. On this account, it became necessary to explore the rich mines of commerce, and, as it were, (by an easy transition) to pass on to the science of politics, and demonstrate, that the national and private advantages to be derived from the former, could only be acquired by a diligent study of the latter. My next motive (to this arrangement of the two subjects) arose from a review of the state of modern nations; many of them owing their particular systems of polity, to commerce.---Such, among others, are,

* Sheridan.

† The Earl of Chatham.

the states of Venice, Genoa and Holland, whose political institutes are founded on commercial maxims.

THIS disposition of my plan has answered my warmest expectations, in the favourable reception of my public lectures on commerce.

HAVING shewn to what a degree of power, riches and felicity, a state, and individuals, may arrive, by means of commerce; we are naturally induced to search after the best political tenets; by which it is to be secured and supported.

WE have already noticed the origin of civil society, under the head of commerce; but we must now treat this subject more amply.

ALL authors, both antient and modern, who have written on the establishment and government of nations, however widely they have differed in their sentiments, concerning the best systems of administration, have been unanimous in their opinion, "That without a due observance of
 " certain, invariable principles of sound policy, which in their very
 " nature are incontrovertible, it would have been impossible ever to have
 " brought mankind together in society, or to have established that har-
 " mony and union amongst them, which was indispensably necessary
 " to render their associations for their common benefit, peaceful and
 " permanent."

I SHALL not presume to waste your time, by displaying a pedantic parade of erudition; it is sufficient that at the bottom of the page, I have noted the antient authors on whose authority I have founded what I have just mentioned on the obvious necessity of adhering to certain political principles *.--What those principles are, and from whence derived, must be our next subject of enquiry.

BUT before I proceed, it may not be improper to give a few clear, concise definitions of the terms of the science we have now under consideration.

THE science of POLITICS may be defined to consist in a skilful management of the public affairs of nations: in other words, it is a science

* PLATO, lib. 6. de legibus. Aristot. de republic, lib. 6. c. 8. de moribus, l. 5 & 10. de Rethoric. l. 1. c. 13. Seneca de Benef. lib. 4. c. 48. Cicero, lib. 1. c. 4. de legibus. Gregorius Tholosanus de Repub. lib. 1.

which comprizes all those rules and measures of human actions, which lead to true happiness: and its end is, the acquiring perfect skill in the management of the public affairs of nations, so as to provide for their safety and tranquility, and to maintain good order and sound manners †.

POLITY is a more limited term, by which we define the form of government of any particular society: it means the civil constitution of any particular state, or capital city; and when its object is the internal administration of the latter, it is stiled, by the French writers, *la police*, the police; a term newly engrafted into our language, to express every thing relative to the duties of the civil magistracy, under the head of preserving the public peace, by protecting those who obey the laws, and punishing those who violate them.

“ POLITY consists in the attention of the prince and magistrates to
 “ preserve every thing in order. Wise regulations ought to prescribe
 “ whatever will best contribute to the public safety, utility and con-
 “ venience; and those who have the authority in their hands, cannot
 “ be too attentive to their being observed. By a wise POLITY, the
 “ sovereign accustoms the people to order and obedience; and preserves
 “ peace, tranquility and concord, among the citizens. People have
 “ attributed to the magistrates of Holland singular talents with respect
 “ to POLITY; their towns, and even their establishments in the Indies,
 “ are generally better governed than any other places in the known
 “ world.”

POLITICAL ARITHMETIC is the application of arithmetical calculations to political uses; thereby stating the produce of the public revenues of a nation---the number of its people---extent and value of its lands, commerce, inland trade and manufactures---on which a scrutiny into the nature of the taxes laid on the inhabitants is founded.

† WHETHER, indeed, politics may be properly termed the first philosophy, it is needless to dispute; but it will hardly be denied to have been one of the first cultivated sciences. The most antient philosophers were all conversant in it; and many of them famed as legislators. *Lord Bolingbroke's Letters to Mr. Pope.*

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THE term POLITICIAN is commonly made use of to define a STATESMAN; one perfectly skilled in politics---well versed in the arts of government---and one, who either has been, or actually is employed in the management of the public affairs of nations. But we must not content ourselves with this partial acceptation of the word; since it is plain, that every citizen, in a free state, may, nay ought to be a POLITICIAN; and HE certainly ought to be so esteemed, who, in the private walk of life, conducts himself according to the true principles of political wisdom; and thereby, as far as in him lies, studies and practises the art of government; and, in his particular station, contributes to, or promotes, the safety, welfare, tranquility and good order of the civil society of which he is a member.

THESE are the general terms, which I thought proper to explain---to prevent all perplexity, in the pursuit of our subject.

WE will now return to our proposed enquiry.---What are the fixed, invariable principles of sound policy, according to the unanimous opinion of all legislators, and of every author, ancient and modern, on the subject, and from whence are they derived?

THE principles, or Elements of Policy are derived from three sources.

I. THE divine, natural law; commonly called, The law of nature.

II. THE inspired written law.

III. Civil CODES of human institution.

THE divine law of nature, is so called, by all antient authors, because they maintained; that the DEITY, when he created man, impressed on his mind, and engraved on his heart, clear and distinct notions of a law, that was to serve him as an invariable rule of action; that this past by tradition, from father to son, till at length it was denominated, common-right; or the law of nature. Most of the legislators of antiquity supported this opinion; and always made a distinction between the oral and written law.

THIS law of nature is founded on THREE principles.

I. RELIGION.

II. SELF-LOVE.

III. SOCIABILITY.

THE sole object of the first is, the duty that men owe to the Supreme Being.

PIETY, or religion generally considered, without regard to any particular theological systems, consists in an acknowledgment of the dependant state of mankind; in a firm belief that man owes his existence and preservation to a supreme, perfect, eternal Being; who is the first mover and cause of all things; who governs and directs this sublunary world by the principles of unerring wisdom; and who has a right to expect from us the homage of genuine gratitude for his constant protection, and for the faculties he has bestowed on man, which give him the pre-eminence over all the works of the creation; in whatever kind of worship, or adoration, therefore, the debt of gratitude is paid; it is a duty dictated by the law of nature. A fear of offending or displeasing him, which we can only do, by departing from any of those principles of the law of nature, which respect our duty to him, to ourselves, or to mankind; an entire submission to his will; and the purest sentiments of love, respect and veneration, arising from the contemplation of his divine attributes, comprise the duties enjoined by this first principle of the law of nature.

THE first duty of man, respecting himself, which arises out of the second principle of the law of nature, SELF-LOVE, is, to form a just idea of his own nature; and of his passions, or affections.

THE second duty, he owes himself is, to persuade himself, that he holds his being from GOD, as a sacred pledge for which he is accountable to HIM; consequently, that he is obliged to use all possible means to preserve that life; and by assiduous labour, mental or corporeal, to aid and improve his natural powers, so as to qualify them, to produce actions worthy the excellency of his nature! In other words, he is to think and act in such a manner as he conceives to be most conformable to the divine will and perfections: as far as a finite being is capable of imitating the Deity, he is to make the attributes of the Creator his rule and model; from whence he will derive the practice of morality.

BUT man, not being born for himself alone, but being appointed to live in society with his own species, SOCIABILITY, which is the third principle of the law of nature, we shall plainly demonstrate, was absolutely necessary, for the comfort and convenience of life.

A GREAT number of authorities, from the most celebrated antient writers, might be brought to support this important proposition; but it is so self-evident, that I shall content myself with citing two beautiful passages on this subject, the one from Seneca, and the other, from our countryman, Dr. Ferguson, to whose excellent Essay on the History of Civil Society, I shall frequently have occasion to refer, in the course of this treatise.

SENECA, to prove the baseness of ingratitude, makes use of the following most nervous and elegant reasoning. "That nothing
 "disturbs so much, the concord and union of mankind, as this vice;
 "for on what does our safety depend, if not on the mutual services
 "we render to each other? Certainly, it is this commerce of benefits,
 "which alone renders life commodious, and puts us in a condition
 "to defend ourselves against unforeseen insults and assaults. What
 "would be the condition of mankind, if each individual lived alone!
 "As many of the species as led this solitary life, so many [booties or
 "victims would be prepared for other animals---a sacrifice easy to be
 "made---in a word, weakness itself!

"IN fact, all other animals have strength sufficient for their
 "defence---Those, that are quite savage, and whose ferocity will not
 "permit them to herd together in troops, are born, as we may say,
 "completely armed---whereas, MAN is, on every side, surrounded
 "with weakness--having neither nails nor teeth to render him
 "formidable---but these succours, of which he is destitute by nature,
 "he finds in society with his equals. Nature, to indemnify him,
 "has given him two things, which, from weak and miserable as he
 "would have been without them, render him very strong and very
 "powerful. I mean REASON and SOCIABILITY--so that he who, alone,
 "could not resist any one, becomes, by this union, master of all.
 "Society gives him dominion over all other animals, not excepting
 "even

“ even those of the sea, which are produced and live in another element. It is the social disposition which stops the ravages of diseases--- furnishes succours to old age---allwages our griefs---gives us a claim to implore the assistance of others, against the accidents of fortune; and inspires us with courage to support them.--Take away sociability, and you will destroy the union of mankind---on which depends--- the preservation and happiness of life *.”

“ IF both the earliest and the latest accounts, collected from every quarter of the earth, represent mankind as assembled in troops and companies; and the individual always joined by affection to one party, while he is possibly opposed to another; employed in the exercise of recollection and foresight; inclined to communicate his own sentiments, and to be made acquainted with those of others: these facts must be admitted as the foundation of all our reasoning relative to man. His mixed disposition to friendship or enmity, his reason, his use of language and articulate sounds, like the shape and the erect position of his body, are to be considered as so many attributes of his nature: they are to be retained in his description, as the wing and the paw are in that of the eagle and the lion; and as difference in degrees of fierceness, vigilance, timidity, or speed, are made to occupy a place in the natural history of different animals †.”

BUT it is not sufficient to have discovered the origin, the necessity, and good effects of society amongst men; our subject requires, that we should lay down the rules and obligations arising out of the general principles of the LAW OF NATURE.

THESE may be reduced to four capital points.

1. NEVER to injure any man.
2. To do unto others, as we would wish they should do unto us, negatively; not to make others suffer, what we cannot endure ourselves.
3. IF we have transgressed this rule of right, by injuring any one, in his person, his reputation, or his property, to repair it incessantly, to the utmost of our abilities.

* Seneca de Benef. l. 4. c. 18.

† Essay on the History of Civil Society, by Adam Ferguson, L. L. D. London, printed for T. Cadell, 1768.

4. IT is not sufficient to abstain from hurting others; we must do them all the good in our power.

REMARK.---It may now be demanded, with great propriety, what instruction do we derive from this definition of the law of nature? My answer is---That from its three grand principles we learn---

1. THAT we cannot possibly be ATHEISTS.
2. THAT we must not be SUICIDES.
3. THAT we have no right to be IDLERS.
4. THAT we did not come into the world to be HERMITS.

FARTHER researches into the state of nature, would only lead us into discussions foreign to our subject; all the knowledge we want to deduce from antiquity, or the natural history of mankind, in their rude state, before the impressions of property and interest took place, is, "That every individual of the species, was, by nature, designed for a member of community; and consequently, considered in this capacity, appears not to have been made for himself, but for society;" and that the principles of natural law are founded upon the social disposition, which distinguishes the human race from that of all other animals.

WE will now proceed to shew, that the LAW of NATIONS, which originally cemented and united different societies in one bond of common amity, has its origin in the principles of the law of nature.

ON THE LAW OF NATIONS.

WE all know where it is written, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ;
 " and thy neighbour as thyself.

" ON these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

AND on these likewise, depend all the systems of sound policy, in every well regulated society on earth ; for on these are founded,

THE LAW OF NATIONS, the next object of our consideration.

THE law of nations, properly defined, is no more than a just and rational application of the law of nature, respecting individuals, to the public affairs and conduct of states.

NATURAL law, says HOBBS, is divided into the natural law of man, and the natural law of states ; and the latter is what we call the law of nations *. The same definition is given by BURLAMAQUI the civilian, in other words. " Natural law, and the law of nations, are
 " in reality one and the same thing, and differ only by an external
 " denomination. We must therefore say, that the law of nations,
 " properly so called, and considered as a law proceeding from the
 " Deity, is nothing else but the law of nature itself ; not applied to
 " men, considered simply as such, but to nations, states, or their
 " chiefs, in the relations they have together, and the several interests
 " they have to manage between each other †."

ONE would imagine this rational deduction of the origin of the law of nations, to be so obvious to the meanest capacity, that it could not

* Hobbes de Cive.

† Burlamaqui's Principles of Natural and Political Law, translated by Dr. Nugent. London, printed for J. Nourse, 1763.

possibly have met with opponents ; but what law so sacred, what maxim so clear, that the faculties of men, under the influence of the passions of ambition or interest, will not attempt to obscure, or to explain away the force of it, by unnatural interpretations!

BESIDES those already cited, we have the authorities of JUSTINIAN, PUFENDORF, BARBEYRAC, WOLFE, MONTESQUIEU, VATEL, and others of less note, in our favour. But, as the consequence of proving that the law of nations, is no more than the law of nature, respecting individuals, applied to the affairs of civil societies, is, the establishment of certain natural obligations on nations, which they cannot dispense with, for the laws of nature are eternal and immutable ; a set of modern writers have started up, who have endeavoured, because they could not reconcile the conduct of modern powers to the just and equitable maxims of natural law, to maintain, that there is no such thing as an immutable obligatory law of nations, founded on the law of nature.

To countenance the violations of the rights of human nature, which have been made with impunity by tyrants, their flatterers and sycophants have had recourse to an artful expedient, derived from false principles of policy. As political necessity, and reasons of state, are the rules of conduct, which sovereigns and their ministers have thought proper to substitute in the place of natural law, or the law of nations, it became necessary to give some colour to this alteration in the systems of civil governments ; and therefore, the following doctrine has been warmly contended for by the enemies to the freedom and independance of mankind:

“ THAT the law of nations is arbitrary, and only founded on express, or tacit conventions.”

WE are willing to give this political maxim its full force, when it is not meant to uphold tenets contradistinct from the immutable, indispensable obligations of the law of nature ; or to reduce the true law of nations, to the level of human institutions : we shall readily allow, that there is a voluntary, customary law of nations, which may be justly termed subordinate to natural law ; and we shall endeavour to mark out its just boundaries ; but the policy of modern
nations

nations having clearly demonstrated that princes and ministers of state, have aimed at making void the obligatory rules of the true law of nations, by rendering the customary law superior to that, which is derived from nature; thereby finding plausible pretexts to act contrary to the common interests of mankind; or, which is the same thing, to the unalterable rules of sincerity, justice and humanity; it will be necessary to prove,

FIRST, That the true law of nations, deduced from the principles of natural law, is obligatory in its own nature; and that all its necessary rules ought to be universally observed; because the principles of sociability are universal.

SECONDLY, That the customary law of nations, founded on casual consent, or on express, or tacit conventions, cannot be obligatory any further, than as it is reconcileable to the principles of natural law.

THIRDLY, That sovereigns, or states, pretending to ground their political conduct on any customary, or arbitrary law, which deviates from the elements of natural law, if they thereby injure other nations, act upon tyrannic principles, and are to be considered as public criminals, who deserve condign punishment as much, or more, in proportion to the mischief they have done, than private individuals, who violate the laws of common right, or, in other words, the law of nature.

AFTER having discussed these points, that no mistake may be pleaded by artful politicians, we shall give in their order, from the best authorities, those eternal obligations contained in the true law of nations, which differ in no respect from the law of nature, and which, on that account, no rulers or people on the habitable globe, can dispense with, or alter, even by common consent, without transgressing their duty. In the next place, it shall be made appear that all human treaties and conventions ought to be conformable to these rules; and finally, the well known maxims of the customary law of nations, so far as they are reconcileable to the principles of common right, shall be clearly stated.

FROM the principle of SOCIABILITY we must prove our first position; for from that principle, as from their real source, all the laws of society,

society, and all our general and particular duties towards other men are derived *.

THIS spirit of union, which the Supreme Being has implanted in the soul of man, requires, that in every thing relating to society, the public good should be the supreme rule of conduct; and that, guided by the counsels of prudence, men should never pursue their private advantage to the prejudice of the public; for this is what the state of mankind demands, and it is consequently the will of our common Father.

THE principle of sociability is universal. Human society embraces all those with whom we can possibly have any communication; because it is founded on the relations we all bear to one another, in consequence of our nature and state †.

REASON next informs us, that creatures of the same rank and species, born with the same faculties to live in society, and to partake of the same advantages, have, in general, an equal and common right. We are therefore obliged to consider ourselves as naturally equal, and to behave as such; and it would be bidding defiance to nature, and the God of nature, not to acknowledge this principle of equity, by the Civilians stiled, *æquabilitas juris*, as one of the first foundations of society. On this principle is built the *lex talionis*; as also that simple, but universal and useful rule, "To do unto others as we would wish they should do unto us."

SOCIABILITY being a reciprocal obligation among men, such as through malice, or injustice, break the band of society, cannot reasonably complain, if they are considered as common enemies to the natural rights of mankind, and are proceeded against, by forcible measures.

THESE general maxims are replete with consequences, which establish the immutability and universality of the obligations contained in the natural law of nations. For if the Deity, by means of right reason, enjoins certain duties between individuals, it follows, that

* Burlamaqui's Principles of Natural Law.

† Pufendorf's Law of Nature and Nations.

nations, which are only large societies of individuals, should be bound to the same reciprocal duties to each other.

BUT this will appear more evident, when we consider, that though the various systems of government established among mankind, introduced a great change in the state of nature, yet it was never the intention of any honest or wise legislators to subvert it entirely, or to destroy the essential relations between man and man, or between God and man. On the contrary, the civil state supposes the nature of man to be such as the Creator has formed it; it supposes the primitive state of union, with all the relations it includes; it supposes, in fine, the natural dependance of man with respect to the Supreme Being, and the laws of nature. The plan of government, therefore, instead of subverting this first order of nature, ever was, and always will be, to give a new degree of force and consistency to all our natural duties. Every system of policy not proceeding upon this principle, is a species of tyranny, more properly than a form of government. "Nations or states," says VATEL, "are bodies politic; societies of men united together, to procure their mutual safety and advantage, by means of their union."

"EACH society has its particular affairs and interests; it deliberates and takes resolutions in common, and thus becomes a moral person, having an understanding and a will peculiar to itself, and being susceptible of obligations and laws."

Now, from this definition of bodies politic, under whatever form they may be distinguished, a consequence follows, of the utmost importance to our cause.

CIVIL SOCIETIES are states of equality; a parity of right is established by nature between them, and obliges them, if they do their duty, to have a reciprocal regard for each other's welfare and tranquility. Hence the general principle of the law of nations is nothing more, than the general law of sociability, which obliges all nations, that have any intercourse with each other, to practise those duties to which individuals are naturally subject. And considering bodies politic as moral persons, it is plain there can be but one sole and the same rule of justice and common right, for all mankind.

I CANNOT adduce any stronger arguments to prove, that from the commencement of civil society, a set of invariable rules or maxims must have been established for the government of the whole human race, to enable them to advance towards the perfection of their natures, and to live like rational beings.

NOTWITHSTANDING these maxims may have been lost in ages of barbarism, obscured by bigotry and superstition, or obstructed by modern policy, yet, they are not the less immutable and obligatory on all civilized nations, to latest posterity; and as they form what may be properly stiled, the positive law of nations, I shall delineate them, in as concise a manner as possible; and establish them as invariable, true political principles.

THE general obligations of civil societies to each other are,

I. THAT all nations should reciprocally contribute to each other's happiness and prosperity. This is what the law of nature required at first, between man and man; but, as every individual owes a primary duty to himself, which surpasses all other obligations, so it is with nations; therefore, the law of nations, in prescribing universal benevolence, does not mean to extend it so far, as that any nation should assist another, or promote its interest, or welfare, to its own detriment: the general obligation ceases, when that is the case; because the performance of it, is deemed morally and politically impossible.

To render this familiar by example:---Let us suppose Great Britain demanded of a power, with whom she was not only at peace, but actually allied by the strongest treaties of amity, to permit the free entrance and consumption of certain British manufactures, in that state: a refusal might be justly given, without violating the law of nations; and in these terms---“Our state cannot subsist without the revenues
“ arising from the duties of importation on foreign manufactures;
“ besides, we have established similar manufactures of our own: we
“ cannot, therefore, assist you in the disposal of your's; nor thus
“ promote your commercial interest, without manifest prejudice to our
“ own state.” The same may be urged with regard to military
succours;

succours; and the being engaged in the quarrels of nations; as these may prove essentially injurious to the assisting state*.

BUT if the calamities of famine, fire, inundations or earthquakes, desolate nations; it then becomes an indispensable obligation on all other nations to lend their immediate and effectual assistance to the suffering state, in proportion to their power and abilities, and to the distressed circumstances of the sufferers.

SUCH was the unhappy fate of Lisbon, A. D. 1755---and to the immortal honour of Great Britain! she was the first to put in practice this general obligation of the law of nations, by affording speedy and liberal succours.

II. NOT to invade each other's dominions, or perform any acts of hostility suddenly; or by surprize; nor without publickly assigning just and sufficient cause.

THE conduct of modern nations has frequently been diametrically repugnant to this equitable principle of the law of nations; and the occasional violations of it, have but too plainly proved, in these latter times, that even Christian powers have considered it, as having no other basis but arbitrary custom, which might be broke through on every occasion, administered by political necessity. To the misfortune of mankind, they have adopted, too seriously, the opinions of writers, who were enemies to the civil rights of mankind, and friends to tyranny and oppression:---hence, the invasion of the territories of the savage, but to them innocent inhabitants of Asia and America---the seizing on their property---the expulsion, captivity, and massacre of the natives, under the plausible pretext of civilizing them:

AND hence, a reproachful innovation on the common rights of the

* The duties towards ourselves, having incontestably the advantage over our duty with respect to others, a nation ought, in the first place, preferably to all other considerations, to do whatever it can, to promote its own happiness and perfection: I say whatever it can, not only in a physical, but in a moral sense; that is, what it can do lawfully, and consistent with justice and integrity. When, therefore, it cannot contribute to the welfare of another, without doing an essential injury to itself, the obligation ceases on this particular occasion; and the nation is considered as under an impossibility of performing that office.

Vattel Droit des Gens.

subjects of all nations upon earth, has been contended for;---has actually been carried into execution by Great Britain;---and has been applauded, as a mark of public spirit, and political wisdom! I mean, the seizing, by force of arms, on the persons and effects of the private subjects of any nation, previous to a public declaration of war. By the law of nations, no state ought to proceed to acts of hostility against another, till such a declaration has been made; for the subjects of each, who cannot be supposed to enter into the intrigues of courts, repose securely on the good faith subsisting between their sovereign, and the powers with whom he is at peace; and, in that confidence, thus adventure their persons and properties on the perilous ocean: nor can they have any other means to be informed that a rupture has happened, but a declaration of war; which instantly puts them on their guard, and enables them to provide for their security. But to ruin and destroy them, prior to such a declaration, is no other than piracy; and cannot be justified on any principle of political necessity whatever.

SOME modern writers and politicians have asserted, that the retaliating party is not obliged to make a public declaration against the assailant: but they are in the wrong; for neutral nations cannot pretend to determine which party is the aggressor, barely by their manifestoes; and as the interests of civil societies are variously connected and combined by treaties, which sometimes are of a very private nature; it appears to be highly obligatory on nations, between whom a rupture has happened, to give public notice of it, by the accustomary solemn declarations of war. In fact, this is an indispensable obligation, imposed by the second principle of the positive law of nations, in order that the lives and properties of the subjects of neutral nations, may not be unexpectedly endangered, by their connections with the contending parties---connections formed in times of profound peace; and often concentrated in commercial transactions alone.

No degree of power then, nor any possible advantage to be derived from the exercise of it, will prevail with the statesman, who considers the LAW of NATIONS as founded on the LAW of NATURE; and THAT, as being consonant to our ideas of the attributes of equity and goodness.

goodness in the Deity; to violate so fundamental a principle of honest policy.

BUT, on the contrary, he who looks upon the law of nations to be founded only on arbitrary custom, and the casual consent of states, will break through it, with as much ease, and as little ceremony, as through a private, particular convention between nation and nation; whenever a political necessity, or a political advantage occurs; but let him remember, that in such a case, he leaves a stain upon his country, which no military achievements, no territorial or commercial successes can erase; and has opened a door to illegal retaliation.

III. NOT to molest, hurt, imprison, or put to death, the subjects of one nation residing in another; nor to seize on, or confiscate their effects, without a just cause.

IV. To exercise all the offices of common humanity to each other: such as sending out assistance from sea-ports to the relief of ships in distress---furnishing the crews with provisions *---and affording all due succours to nations afflicted with famine, and other dreadful calamities.

V. To allow of a mutual intercourse with each other, when no particular reasons of state forbid it.

VI. NOT to declare war against each other, but for the most weighty reasons: never for trifles. For war is the severest act of public justice; since its end is, the destruction of mankind.

To declare war, is to pronounce a sentence of death against a nation; which we resolve to execute, when in our power. If then, we are not insensible to the feelings of humanity, we should seriously ask

* No nation ought to take umbrage at another for supplying its enemy with provisions and other necessities of life, when its fleets or armies touch at a neutral country; for they have a right to demand such succours by the law of nations; and even to take them by force, if refused. The Turks, therefore, could not declare war against Great Britain, on account of our furnishing provisions, and other necessities, to the Russian fleets in our ports; nor even for selling them warlike stores. But if we had transported these to the scene of action in our own ships, the Turks would have had a right to seize them, and confiscate both ships and cargoes: and it was on this principle we seized several Dutch ships carrying ammunition to our enemies the French, during the last war.

ourselves

ourselves this question---Has the offending prince, and his subjects, so deeply transgressed, that nothing will do but putting them to death? Would to God this point were more conscientiously debated, in the councils of Christian kings, before they cry havock, and let loose the dogs of war!

VII. To respect that freedom and independence, which each nation derives from the law of nature; and which we are as much bound to let them enjoy peaceably, though we have superior strength on our side, as we are not to deprive an individual of his personal liberty, if he has not violated the laws of the country in which he resides.

FROM this liberty and independence it follows, that nations, like private persons, are to judge conscientiously of what they can or cannot do; of what is proper or improper to be done; and, consequently, to examine and determine what offices they can perform for each other; and what they may equitably refuse. In all cases therefore, where a nation has the liberty of judging what its duty requires; another cannot compel it to act in this or that manner, as the requiring nation shall dictate. For to attempt this, is to violate the natural liberty of nations.

It may now be comprehended, without difficulty, why the right is always imperfect, when the obligation which answers to it, depends on the judgment of another. Our obligation is always imperfect, in relation to others, when the decision of what we have to do is reserved to ourselves; and this decision is reserved to us on all occasions, where we have a right to be free.

NATIONS then, like individuals, deriving from the law of nature, a state of freedom, rational independence, and equality; the honour of a nation, as well as the conscience of a private man, must be sometimes relied on; and therefore, we must leave to all nations, a right to determine within themselves, on certain obligations they owe to universal society; and, in many instances, to put their own construction on some parts of the law of nations: their adherence to many particulars, must consequently be voluntary, and cannot be compulsory; because, we are not to destroy the natural right they have to form their own particular governments

governments or administrations, on principles which they may judge equitable and conscientious, but which, in some respects, may clash with the general law of nations. Such, for instance, are the particular regulations of different states, with respect to religion, commerce, and the administration of justice; for however some of these may be found to deviate even from the common rights of humanity, yet nations cannot interfere in the contests that may arise between the people and their governors, in any state, on account of such regulations.

AND this leads me to the discussion of the customary law of nations, founded on the various constructions of the principles of the positive law of nations, by different civil societies of men.

PERSECUTIONS for religious systems and opinions, are manifest infringements on the law of nature and of nations; but if a particular state dooms to death one half of its subjects, it is customary for other nations not to take part in the affair; for this would be to involve the whole world in continual wars. The unhappy people, having submitted to the system of polity established in their country, must effectuate a revolution themselves, or patiently endure their hard lot; but they cannot claim foreign succour, on the general principles of the law of nations.

It is absolutely necessary then, for the peace of ~~the~~ world, that nations should take no notice of open scenes of barbarity and oppression in others; because they are not entitled to oppose them by force of arms: for this would be to violate the freedom and independence each nation asserts, to govern its own domains, on principles peculiar to itself; and said to be adapted to the climate, genius, temper and manners of the inhabitants. For this reason it is agreed upon, by the general consent of all civilized nations, not to intermeddle in the great revolutions that happen in the different societies of men: on the sole principle of observing the law of nations. Where they are bound by treaties to guaranty successions, the case is different; it then becomes political law.

OR if, on a projected revolution, the majority of the troubled state, or any branch of its legislature, apply (by request) for foreign aid; then

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it becomes a matter of political consideration in the nation applied to, whether they shall interfere or not?

THIS was the case, in our glorious revolution, when King William was invited over, and was assisted by the states-general.

BUT if no such treaties subsist, nor no such particular application is made for relief, the connections with foreign states, and the *routine* of external, political affairs, often go on in the same channel, amidst the internal commotions of a state.

WE even frequently see ambassadors, and other persons invested with public characters, remain, and perform their functions during a civil war, or a revolution. This was the case on the late remarkable revolution in Russia; and it has happened on many occasions of a similar nature:---too many indeed to recite.

IT is a customary obligation for nations to notify to each other, when any general, epidemical diseases rage in their dominions; and to give bills of health to masters of ships, and to all travellers passing from one country to another, to ascertain the healthy state of each; and, by this means, to promote the safety of mutual intercourse.

IT is customary to respect the persons and characters of ambassadors, and other public ministers; and, in all CIVILIZED nations, to grant them certain privileges and immunities.

IT is a received maxim, but too often deviated from, not to corrupt and seduce each other's subjects; but the establishment of manufactures in most modern states, has arisen, in a great degree, from repeated violations of this maxim.

IT is equally interdicted to nations, to sow discord, or foment divisions or rebellions in each other's dominions, by clandestine means; as by spies and private emissaries---to gain over each other's allies secretly---to deprive each other of any natural or acquired advantages---or to tarnish the renown and splendour of each other's fame.

THE honours of precedence, of the flag, dominion of the seas, and other privileges of the like nature, are also founded on custom; and, as such, are rather arbitrary than binding.

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It is with reluctance I find myself obliged to close this head, with a remark very unfavourable to modern policy:

As private men are apt to weigh the obligations they owe to their neighbours, more by their internal notions of their duty, than by positive laws, where these are not enforced by pains and penalties; so nations will often evade, or explain away, by political refinements, or by the rules and maxims of their particular polity, the general obligations of the law of nations: it follows therefore, of course, that, for the most part, they will be but imperfectly observed.

YET, from the general principles of the law of NATURE and of NATIONS, are derived all the systems of government in the known world.

OUR next enquiry then, must be directed to, the origin, or first rise of governments.

ON THE ORIGIN OF GOVERNMENTS.

THE necessity of men's associating together, has been already pointed out: the equal necessity of establishing some system of government, to preserve those associations, and to render them permanent and happy, will appear, from a due attention to the FIRST principle of all rational governments, CIVIL LIBERTY.

THE freedom of individuals, secured by the wisdom and integrity of the community, was the first object of all wise and honest legislators. But as many errors of conduct have arisen in the best regulated societies, from false ideas of civil liberty, which ignorant men often confound with natural liberty, it may be proper, in this place, to give a true definition of both.

NATURAL LIBERTY is the right which nature gives to all mankind, of disposing of their persons and property, in the manner they think most conducive to their happiness; on condition of their keeping within the limits of the law of nature; which prescribes, the not abusing that liberty, to the injury of others: from hence it is observable, "that natural liberty is not entirely a state of independence, as some have fondly imagined; for there is a restraint from mischief and evil actions, arising out of the natural obligations of man to man; independent of society."

THUS, to the right of natural liberty, there ever belonged a reciprocal obligation, not to molest others in the enjoyment of the same right; but the force of separate interests, and of the passions, prompted men, in their primitive state, to a violation of this reciprocal tie.

THE proud, the lustful, the savage and the robust, disturbed the tranquility of the meek, the temperate and the virtuous, on whose natural rights, they made the most shameful encroachments, either through

through fraud or violence: as therefore, man through necessity had associated with his own species to defend him from other animals, so now it became as necessary to secure him from the assaults of his own species, which could not be effected any other way but by surrendering, in a great measure, his natural liberty into the hands of one, or more persons, who, by the common consent of all the members of the association, to which he belonged, should be invested with authority to govern the rest; and armed with power to enforce that authority. Thus men submitted to be governed; and the restraints laid on natural liberty, by the institutes of government, gave it, as it were, a new creation and a new name; for it thenceforth became CIVIL LIBERTY.

THE advantages of this change, are too evident to be called in question. It is true civil liberty differs from natural, in that it divests individuals of the free disposal of their persons and actions, and lodges it in the hands of their rulers; but they are thereby secured against the lawless rapine and violence of malevolent individuals; and they acquire three very considerable rights from civil liberty.

1. THAT of insisting, that these rulers or sovereigns shall make a good use of their authority; particularly by insuring to them, that protection, in consideration of which they resigned their natural liberty.

2. THAT of demanding, or exacting from their rulers, solemn promises, oaths and covenants, for the due performance of their respective duties.

3. THE right of claiming the aid and assistance of all good men, of their own and other societies, to enable them to compel their governors to protect them in their civil rights and immunities; or, on failure thereof, to remove them, and elect others, more worthy to govern.

CIVIL LIBERTY, the first principle of all wise governments, adequately defined, is then, no other but natural liberty itself, divested of that part which constituted the rational independence of individuals, by the authority which it confers on a sovereign; attended with a right of insisting on his making a good use of his authority; and a moral security that this right will have its effect.

SINCE civil liberty, therefore, is far preferable to natural liberty, we

may safely conclude, that the form of government which secures to mankind the most ample enjoyment of this invaluable blessing, is, of all human states, the most perfect, the most rational, and, of course, the best adapted to the nature of man.

BUT before I proceed to the second principle, let me be permitted to point out the utility of the reflections already made on the advantages men derive from the institution of government.

THEY deserve very great attention, being very proper to remove the false notions which most people entertain upon this subject; as if the civil state could not be established but in prejudice to their natural liberty; and as if government had been invented only to satisfy the ambition of designing men, contrary to the interest of the rest of the community.

THEY must inspire men with love and veneration for so salutary an institution; and dispose them to submit cheerfully to whatever the laws of civil society require of them; from a conviction, that the benefits from thence derived, are very considerable.

THEY may likewise contribute greatly to cultivate the love of our country; the first seeds of which, nature herself has implanted in the hearts of all mankind, in order to promote, as it does most essentially, the happiness of society.

SEXTUS EMPIRICUS relates, " That it was a custom among the
 " antient Persians, upon the death of a king, to pass five days in a state
 " of anarchy, as an inducement to be more faithful to his successor,
 " from the experience they acquired of the inconveniences of anarchy;
 " of the many murders, robberies, and every other mischief with which
 " it is pregnant *."

AND as these reflections are calculated to remove the prejudices of private people against government; so likewise do they contain most excellent instructions and admonitions to sovereigns. For can any thing be better adapted to make princes sensible of the full extent of their duty, than to lay before them the ends which the people purposed to themselves when they entrusted them with the custody of

* Advers. Mathematic. lib. 2. Herodot. lib. 1. c. 96.

their natural liberty; and the solemn engagements into which they entered, by the very act of charging themselves with this sacred deposit. We have seen, that by civil liberty mankind acquired certain rights from their sovereigns, and we have shewn what they are. In a word, whatever has been said concerning the advantages of the institution of government, in preference to the state of nature, supposes the administration of it to be as perfect, as the frailty of human reason will admit: that both subjects and sovereigns discharge their reciprocal obligations to each other*.

The SECOND principle, on which civil governments were originally formed was, the ascertaining and securing private property, which was the next object to civil liberty, and may therefore be deemed the second principle of POLITICS.

The THIRD principle was, the institution of civil codes or written ordinances, agreed on by the common consent of the community: obedience to which, was enforced by pains and penalties, which Burlamaqui calls LAW, in its general sense, and thus defines it: "It is a rule prescribed by the sovereign of a society to his subjects, in order to lay an obligation upon them of doing or omitting certain things under the commination of punishments, or to leave them at liberty to act or not, in other things, as they think proper; and to secure to them, in this respect, the full enjoyment of their RIGHTS."

LAWS, therefore, were instituted to oblige subjects to pursue their real interest; and to choose the surest way to attain true happiness.

WHATEVER the LAW does not forbid, is permitted; and on this permission are founded the rights of individuals in any state; and all deviation from this rule, must have for its end, licentiousness or sedition.

The FOURTH principle was, to put into the hands of the person or persons appointed to govern, a certain degree of power and strength; to defend the community from all external assaults from foreign enemies.

FROM this deduction of the original principles of all civil governments, we plainly discover, that their true source was the divine and written

* See Burlamaqui's Principles of Political Law.

law of nature, and civil codes, of human institution, which we specified under the head of the law of nature.

ALL other principles of government arise out of these; and may more properly be stiled, the INSTITUTES of particular nations, than the general ELEMENTS of POLITICS.

ON these then, were formed the first solemn compacts or covenants, between the mass of the people, submitting to be ruled, and their RULERS. The latter, covenanting on their parts, to provide for the honour, safety and interest of the former; and they, for themselves, stipulating to obey them, so long as they should govern them, according to the maxims of virtue and equity. But though all men agreed as to the expediency of framing civil governments, on the principles just laid down, yet great differences arose with respect to the mode or particular system, that was best adapted to these principles.

I KNOW some writers warmly contend for the antiquity of monarchy, or government vested in the hands of a single person; they even go a step further, and pretend, that in the first ages of the world, men were unanimous in their choice of this kind of government. It is not to our purpose to discuss this point: but we may pertinently venture one remark:

THAT, admitting the antiquity and universality of monarchy, it makes against the advocates for that system of government; for, had it been the best calculated to preserve inviolate, the grand principles on which civil compacts were first formed, it would have been the only form of government in the world to this hour; but as this is not the case, we must be obliged, in admitting the antiquity of monarchy, to enquire into the causes of the introduction of other systems; and this now follows, in the order of our subject.

IT is a truth, supported by historical evidence, from all quarters of the globe, That as societies of men multiplied, a diversity of opinions arose, with respect to the internal frame of government; and that various modes were adopted, for the better securing the allegiance of the subject to the supreme POWER; and for preserving inviolate, the PRIVILEGES of the people.

THE fatal effects of the passions, soon made it evident, that the sovereign authority, lodged in the hands of one man, might possibly prove more detrimental than beneficial to society : hence, other forms of government were devised ; and, by the time these were carried into execution, the jarring interests of the several societies, already established, produced violations of the law of NATURE and of NATIONS : from whence arose, civil dissensions and wars ; the consequences of which were, that some societies being oppressed, by the supreme GOVERNOR'S having violated his part of the compact, by which he was appointed to rule over them, implored the assistance of neighbouring states, to enable them to shake off the yoke of obedience.

IN other societies, the people, having violated their engagements, the supreme power was obliged to have recourse to the assistance of some foreign POTENTATE ; to enable him to reduce his rebellious subjects within the limits of legal subjection.

BUT very often it happened, that the bands of CIVIL SOCIETY, once loosened, its dissolution soon followed ; and as often, perfidy wore the mask of friendship ; and the ALLY, called in to assist a distressed MONARCH, or an injured PEOPLE, became the CONQUEROR of both.

FROM this slight sketch of the dire consequences of the passions, we may readily account for the introduction of different systems of government : further evidence on this head, would carry us deep into the records of history, and wide of our plan.---Suffice it then to observe, that we stand indebted to these early dissensions in political opinions, for all the improved systems of POLICY, which have since prevailed in the world.

P A R T II.

ON THE

DIFFERENT FORMS OF GOVERNMENT,
which have generally prevailed in the World.

WE will now take a view of the different forms of government which have owed their rise to the combined causes just mentioned.

THE result will be, an enquiry, which is the best? And this question must be determined by the elementary principles of sound policy, deduced from the LAW of NATURE, and of NATIONS.

By way of introduction, permit me to remark---

THAT every form of government has its advantages and inconveniences inseparably attached to its constitution. It is in vain to seek for a government absolutely perfect; for however any one may appear so in speculation, yet, when reduced to practice, under the administration of men, it will ever partake of the frailties and imperfections of human nature.

POLITICAL writers have agreed to range the several forms of government, that have been instituted by mankind, under three general denominations.

MONARCHY.

ARISTOCRACY.

DEMOCRACY.

AND they thus define them---

MONARCHY is the government of a state by a single person; the sole ruler, or governor of that state. This sole ruler may be differently stiled; for, whether he is called chieftain, king, or emperor, still, the people submitting to his sway, live under monarchical government.

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By this definition it evidently appears, that the first civil governments were of this kind; the very idea of a sole ruler, being derived from the natural authority of the father of a family; as he was, *pater familiæ*, so was the supreme, sole ruler to be, *pater patriæ*; the common father of the whole community.

MONARCHY then undoubtedly claims the precedence, on account of its antiquity, to all other forms of government; though much learning and ingenuity has been displayed by the celebrated Gordon, in his Treatise on Government, to controvert this point; which is supported by the concurrent testimony of all the antient writers.

BUT it as plainly appears, from every respectable authority, antient and modern, that the power of these sole governors, by what title soever distinguished, was derived from, and limited by the people; and also, that it was but very small in the beginning, and gradually became enlarged.

THIS observation I make, by way of introduction to a distinction allowed of by all political writers---of three kinds of MONARCHY.

1. ABSOLUTE.
2. LIMITED.
3. MIXED.

RESPECTING the first, I shall lay down a proposition, that will perhaps surprize the many advocates for despotism; for which reason, I thus publicly declare, that I shall, with great readiness, retract it, if it be clearly proved, that I have either misconceived, or misapplied the sentiments of the venerable authors, from whom I have borrowed it.

“ ABSOLUTE MONARCHY then, or the government of one person,
 “ by the measure of his own WILL and POWER, independant of any
 “ restraint from the people he governs, or any laws by them enacted,
 “ and by him assented to, is only another name for TYRANNY, or
 “ cruel and violent government, unlawfully usurped; having no claim
 “ to origin or antiquity, nor any pretension to our notice, while
 “ treating on the subject of true POLITICS, except this: That as it
 “ found its way into civil societies, by fraud and violence, and still
 “ subsists, in some savage countries, we ought to shew our abhorrence

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“ of

“ of its very name; and, as men! as Christians! and as free-born Britons! to fix an indelible mark of infamy, on all arbitrary power whatever.”

THE proofs of this proposition will arise out of the investigation of the origin and general prevalency of limited monarchy, in the early ages of the world; for if we plainly demonstrate, that this was the only kind of monarchy that ever obtained amongst mankind, by the consent of civil societies, the truth of the assertion, that absolute monarchy is TYRANNY, will stand confessed.

PUFENDORF mentions two conventions, as necessary for the formation of civil societies*.

THE first, that by which each individual agrees with the whole, to form themselves into one body; and with one common consent, to provide for their mutual safety. This convention is either absolute or conditional: if the former, whatever form of government is agreed to by the majority, must be submitted to by every individual; if the latter, no one is bound to enter into the society, unless he approves the form of government proposed to be established.

THE second convention is that, by which (after the form of government is agreed on, by common consent) one, or more PERSONS are chosen, on whom, the power of governing the state is conferred; so that those who are invested with power, may be diligent in providing for the welfare and safety of the public; and that all the rest, may promise faithful obedience to the supreme authority.

OUR countryman Gordon thinks, that Pufendorf makes the first contract of much too restrained a nature; and he establishes the whole basis of government, on that contract alone, whereby each particular agrees with the rest, to submit his actions to the guidance and direction of the universal assembly, provided they do so likewise; and that the ordinances of such assembly be not contrary to the dictates of the law of nature: thus, by extending the plan of Pufendorf's first contract, he justly precludes the necessity of the second.---“ For,” says he, “ from this source alone, may we deduce all the obligations incumbent on

* Pufendorf, lib. 7, c. 9.

“ the members of any state; and we need not search out, either for an ordinance to regulate the form of government, or for any second convention to compel the supreme power, or magistrate, to protect the particulars; or the particulars, to be faithful to the magistrate.”

FROM these two respectable writers, we plainly discover the fountain, from which all supreme power, whether of one or more persons, originally flowed; *viz.* from the body, or general assembly of the people*.

BUT in order to shew how very confined the supreme power was, in the infancy of civil governments, we must carry our enquiries a little further.

As the judiciary power was the sole which government had occasion for originally, and the exercise of it had, by the negligence of the young, devolved on the elders in states; so, when they found they wanted other powers and new authorities to preserve the community, no wonder if they entrusted the leading the forces, voted by the authority of the people (and which were, in truth, no other than the people themselves in arms) to the same elders; who, finding this power of a nature more easily and speedily to be executed by one out of their own body, they chose such an one; who was accountable to them, in like manner, as they were responsible to their constituents. To this election of a general, do many attribute the rise not only of monarchies, but of governments.

BARBEYRAC imagines, that these generals, who were first dignified with the title of kings, were the founders of government; and confesses, that their sole province was to decide causes, and to command armies: but the power of making war or peace, of negotiating treaties,

* IT must be agreed, that sovereignty resides originally in the people, and in each individual with regard to himself; and that it is the transferring and uniting the several rights of individuals, in the person of the sovereign, or supreme ruler, that constitutes him such, and really produces sovereignty. It is beyond all dispute, for example, that when the Romans chose Romulus and Numa for their kings, they must have conferred upon them, by this very act, the sovereignty, which those princes were not possessed of before, and to which they had certainly no other right, than what was derived from the election of the people. *Burlamaqui's Principles of Political Law.*

and every principal branch of the legislative, federative and executive power, was lodged in the people, or their representatives, the elders; the constituents of these GENERALS.

BUT a passage from Dionysius of Hallicarnassus, will put the matter out of doubt, "That limited monarchies were the only kind of regal government, or rule, by one person ever instituted, by the voluntary consent of mankind;" and that absolute monarchy, was always deemed illegal, usurped authority.

"ORIGINALLY," says he, "all the cities of Greece were governed by kings; with this difference, that these exercised not an absolute despotic power, like the barbarians, but according to the laws and customs of their country; so that HE passed for the best KING, WHO most RELIGIOUSLY observed the laws; and departed the least from the customs of his country; which Homer tells us, by calling them distributors of justice: and these kingdoms subsisted long, being administered under FUNDAMENTAL law, and CERTAIN condition. But some kings, having abused their trust, and quitted the path of the law, ruled arbitrarily and despotically; so that most of the Grecian states grew weary of them, and REVOKED their power."

WHAT need we more to prove, that all power was vested conditionally; and that all obligations to rule, and to be ruled, might be dissolved by the same parties that contracted them.

LIMITED MONARCHY, such as Dionysius has described, we may set down as a form of government founded on true political principles.

MIXED MONARCHY is a term, made use of by modern authors, to denote a particular species of limited monarchy; we will not, therefore, enlarge on this distinction at present, but proceed to the second general form of government known in the world;

ARISTOCRACY; a form of government, wherein the supreme, legislative and executive power is vested in the hands of the principal members of a state, independant of the body of the people, or of any supreme authority, residing in any single person.

MODERN writers have described these principal members to be nobles and senators; but these titles of pre-eminence being either modern,

modern, or derived from monarchy, we must not submit to this definition; nor will the term itself, derived from the Greek, admit of it, for it only expresses, that the best of the people, **COMMAND** or **GOVERN**: now whom shall we say were the best among the people to govern a state under an aristocracy, before nobles or senators were known in the world; or whom shall we deem, in this case, the principal members of a state, in the earliest ages of antiquity? Most assuredly, those, whom the body of the people esteemed to be the most virtuous; and venerated for the possession of superior, **NATURAL**, and **ACQUIRED TALENTS**, adapted to rule and government. It is, therefore, highly probable, that they selected a few of the most renowned for **WISDOM**, **TEMPERANCE**, and a love of **JUSTICE**; and of these, framed an **ARISTOCRACY**.

THIS kind of government is not quite so conformable to the law of nature and nations, as limited monarchy; but of this hereafter.

THE third general species of government is,

DEMOCRACY; in which the supreme, legislative and executive power is lodged in the hands of the people; that is to say, in the majority. For where the majority of the people, either by themselves, or those they depute to represent them, have the whole power of the community, and can employ it in making and executing **LAWS**; in this case, the form of government is a perfect **DEMOCRACY** *.

THIS term is also taken from the Greek, and sufficiently describes its constitution; for it defines the government to be vested in the people.

GREAT pains have been taken, by the advocates for this form of government, to prove its antiquity; making it even prior to **MONARCHY**, by alledging, that the first image of civil society, was traced in democratic societies, or families. This dispute is merely speculative; it being of no kind of importance to mankind, at present, what form of government is most antient.

THE grand question is, which is the **BEST**? And in the discussion of this point, I have indeed set myself an arduous task---for I have the

* See Temple, Arbuthnot, and Locke on Government.

free opinions, and the prejudices of the living and the dead, to combat ; with this mortifying circumstance, as the result of all my assiduity, " That it is impossible to give universal satisfaction ;" which all should aim at, who presume to make the public, at once, their judges, and their patrons.

BUT by the principles of the law of NATURE and of NATIONS, which are calculated to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind in society, they must be fairly tried ; and that, in which they are most likely to be religiously observed, and allowance being made for the frailties of human nature, in which they are the least deviated from, must merit the preference, in defiance of private partiality. The public good, as it is the supreme law, ought also to be the supreme rule of judgment.---" The state demands it ; it is therefore the will of " our Common Father ; and ought to preclude every idle prejudice of " a partial education, and the locality of situation."

A N A L Y S I S

OF THE

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

OF

MONARCHY, ARISTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY.

ABSOLUTE MONARCHY, we have seen, is inconsistent with civil society, and therefore it can be no form of civil government; which is intended to remedy the inconveniences of a state of nature*.

MONTESQUIEU says, DESPOTISM is aptly figured in the conduct of the savages of Louisiana, who, to gather the fruit, cut down the trees that bear it. We imagine, therefore, we shall not meet with any advocates for this usurpation on the rights of mankind, except such as do not merit our notice: the sycophants of corrupt courts.

To a limited monarchy, in which the power of the sovereign is only restrained from becoming absolute, by the original compact between him and his subjects, but in which there is no mixture of aristocratic or democratic principles, a variety of objections are made; drawn both from the nature of such government, and from the experience of its inconveniences, found in history.

* Sovereignty always supposes a beneficent power: we must indeed make some allowances for the weakness inseparable from humanity; but beyond that, and when the people are reduced to the last extremity, there is no difference between tyranny and robbery. The one gives no more right than the other; and we may lawfully oppose force to violence.

Men have established civil society and government for their own good; to extricate themselves from troubles, and to be rescued from the evils of a state of nature. But it is highly evident, that if the people were obliged to suffer every oppression from their sovereigns, and never to resist their encroachments, this would be reducing them to a far more deplorable state, than that which they intended to avoid by the institution of sovereignty.

Burlamaqui's Political Law.

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THE first is, the difficulty of preserving the balance of power between the prince and the people, from their perpetual jealousy of each other. ---The prince, and his courtiers, construing every enquiry into their conduct, to be factious and seditious; and the people, deeming the exertions of the prince's prerogatives, as so many advances, or strides towards arbitrary power: now, the consequences of this struggle between them, in nations where the people have not reserved to themselves the power of making, amending, and repealing the laws, for their government, are, tumults, insurrections, rebellions and revolts on the part of the people; and either a violent, or corrupt administration, on the part of the prince.

SECONDLY, It is objected, that the splendor, pomp and magnificence attending the regal state, intoxicates the mind of the possessor; allures him to a life of luxury and indolence, and disposes him to divest himself of the painful cares of government, which he generally consigns to the conduct of ministers, who are his devoted slaves.

THUS an inferior species of despotism takes place; and the people are too often oppressed and enslaved: having no power reserved to oppose against the united force of the monarch and his ministers; who are the fountains of honour, and dispensers of favours, by means whereof, they can corrupt the leaders of the people, and buy those over to their party, who ought to stand in the gap, and defend the just rights of the people; As strenuously As the courtiers support the prerogatives of the prince, on whom they immediately depend.

If by means then, of a multitude of dignities, and offices of trust and emolument, a prince can secure to himself such a party in his dominions, that, though he stands engaged by solemn compact to govern according to fundamental maxims, and established laws, he may dispense with them at pleasure, being sure of protection and support, against the rage of his subjects, from his dependant servants, it is plain, the grand end of the law of nature in the institution of civil government is defeated: "for the freedom of the individual, will not be secured by the wisdom and integrity of the community:" on the contrary, his civil liberty and his property will be subject to encroachments,

encroachments, as dangerous in their tendency, though perhaps not so rapid and violent, as in a state of despotism; to which all limited monarchies decline, that have not a mixture of the democracy in their limitation. These being the strongest arguments against this form of government, it is needless to add others of less note.

TO ARISTOCRACY, numberless objections arise, which plainly prove, that it is not a free form of government; but two or three will be sufficient to shew that it cannot be the BEST.

A CONTENTION for power has been the bane of aristocratic governments; and though the abilities and assiduity of many seem to be combined for the public service, yet the tie of common interest, is not strong enough to resist the violence of private feuds and animosities, which never fail to break out in such constitutions.

WHEN the government is lodged entirely in the hands of the nobles, or chief families of a country, and they are accountable only to their own body, it is evident, that the rest of the people, having no power of redress by appeal, cannot have so much as the shadow of civil liberty; their persons and property being at the disposal of the arbitrary nobles, who make what laws they please: and therefore, such a state may be called a government of tyrants.

MONTESQUIEU observes, that two things are to be dreaded in an ARISTOCRACY: the extreme poverty and exorbitant riches of the nobles. What are we to infer from either of these situations, but a cruel oppression of the people?

ARISTOCRACY then, is by no means calculated to answer the ends of civil government, instituted on the principles of the law of nature; for an unnatural inequality takes place between man and man; and no security is given, that the subordinate part, shall enjoy the civil rights and privileges, for which they surrendered their natural liberty; and allowed the assumption of superiority, to these their compeers.

DEMOCRACY, or popular government, at first sight, bids the fairest for the preference, as approaching the nearest to the state of nature, freed from its inconveniences. Its first principle being that of equality amongst men, we are led to believe, that this form of government, is

the most conformable to the first plan of civil society. In perfect democracies, the power of making, altering, and repealing the laws, by which they are to be governed, is vested in the people themselves.

THE elections to offices of honour, trust and emolument, are either by free suffrage, by lot, or by rotation; and in the latter case, the frequent changes prevent the growth of exorbitant power and influence.

A SPIRIT of moderation usually prevails in democracies; and the sole ambition is, to deserve well of the community.

VIRTUE and INDUSTRY is the basis of education; because it lays the foundation of pre-eminence, under this form of government.

FRUGALITY is the characteristic of a democracy; because the principle of equality destroys that of envy, the pillar of luxury.

SALUTARY LAWS must necessarily be enacted, and duly observed, because all are equally interested in their execution.

PROBITY must be a principle of self-love in a democracy; for to defraud the state, is to commit a robbery on one's-self, where the management of the public treasure is in the hands of those that formed it.

EVERY CITIZEN, in a democratic state, finds it necessary to be a good subject; as that qualification is a chief ground of his title to be a RULER.

THESE are the boasted advantages of the democratical form of government: but they are unfortunately counterpoised by many, and very great inconveniences.

THE first I shall mention, is an insurmountable objection.

ONE of the grand principles on which civil government was first instituted---the providing for, and securing the safety of the state, against the assaults of foreign enemies, is so weakened and impeded, by the slow, irresolute, discordant deliberations and councils of great assemblies, in whom is vested the supreme power in republican governments; that the danger has often proved irremediable, for the enemy has been at the door, before a majority in such assemblies could be brought to agree on the necessary measures to be taken for the defence of the state: and where unanimity, or the absolute consent of the whole

whole has been required, as in some democracies, the case has been still worse; so that, on these emergencies, republican governments have been obliged to borrow from the system of monarchy part of the regal power; and to invest a single person with supreme authority; at least for a time; till the crisis was over, in which popular government had proved defective.

THE election of **DICTATORS** in the Roman commonwealth, and of **STAT HOLDERS** in Holland, are sufficient proofs of what we have advanced on this head.

ANOTHER principle of the law of nature and of nations, is evidently impaired in the internal administration of a democratic form of government; which is, the equal and impartial distribution of justice: an accurate attention to the mode of carrying on and determining processes, as well civil as criminal, in modern republics, will serve to convince us, that where there are such multitudes of magistrates and judges, there must be great opportunities for the introduction of venality and corruption; and for the bias of natural affection, affinity, private friendship, and interested connections.

POPULAR TUMULTS are of the number of evils to which a democracy is subject; and by which individuals are often thrown back into a state of nature, and all the ends of civil society totally defeated: for when anarchy prevails, the lives and properties of the weak and defenceless lie at the mercy of brutal force, and lawless power. The facility with which the main body of the people, in a democracy, can resume their delegated authority, is the next evil; a florid speech in an assembly; a predilection in favour of particular men; a combination secretly formed, by means of bribery, or family connections, has often been the occasion of changing or revoking the laws, and the decrees of senates in republican governments; and a refusal to comply with the sudden caprices of the populace, has frequently occasioned dangerous and bloody insurrections, and partial revolutions. I mean the removal of magistrates, and alterations in the mode of government, where they have not totally subverted it.

LICENTIOUSNESS of manners is another evil of democracies, arising from too high a notion of the natural equality of mankind, and the want of a fixed veneration and respect for superiors, who govern only for a limited time, and then are reduced to a level with the mass of the people, who have been accustomed to obey them.

MANY other objections might be brought against this form of government; but enough has been said to prove, that it cannot be the most eligible: for it does not, in many instances, so closely adhere to the principles of the law of nature, as limited monarchy.

IT might now be expected that I should close the subject, and decide that important question: which is the best form of government in the known world? But, happily for the peace and prosperity of many civilized nations, it has been long since discovered, that the three forms, of which I have given a concise analysis, are so defective, that they cannot answer the principal design of instituting civil governments.

THIS I shall demonstrate in a very few words; which may serve as a recapitulation of the grand objections to limited monarchy, aristocracy and democracy.

CIVIL LIBERTY, the first principle upon which all wise governments are founded, has two powerful enemies in society.

1. OPPRESSION, springing from tyranny.
2. LICENTIOUSNESS, arising from popular degeneracy.

BUT to describe these defects in government more distinctly: it has been customary with political writers to stile the corruption of monarchy, TYRANNY; the abuse of aristocracy, OLIGARCHY; and the disorder of democracy, OCHLOCRACY.

IF then each of the forms of government we have described, are, from the very nature of their several constitutions, liable to such defects as equally tend to the subversion of civil liberty, we most assuredly cannot give any one of them the preference to the other two. And this is the very reason, why so antient a dispute, which has employed the pens of the ablest writers from Herodotus, the father of history, down to the latest author on the controversy, has never been decided.

It is easy to perceive, that in a limited monarchy, the sovereign has only to break through the original, simple contract between him and his people, to become a tyrant; and this he may do by means of a standing army, or a well furnished treasury, both of which are very often in the power of the sovereign of a formidable people. Oppression therefore, one of the enemies to CIVIL LIBERTY, may find a ready admission into limited monarchies.

In aristocracies, oligarchy, which is the bane of civil liberty, is almost unavoidable; for the unruly passions of some of the nobles, or senators who compose an aristocracy, will lead them into extravagance of every kind; and prodigality engendering poverty, THESE will be disposed to sell their power and influence in the state, to a few opulent, bold, designing men, on condition that they shall enjoy the exclusive privilege of not feeling the weight of their oppressive government. Thus an oligarchy is formed; and this degeneracy, from a plan of government, very defective in its own nature, has been generally deemed a worse species of oppression than the tyranny of one man, which springs from monarchy.

As for democracies, the slightest reflection on the defects already stated, must convince us, that anarchy, or that kind of confusion which throws men back into the state of nature, and deprives them of all the advantages of civil liberty, is greatly to be apprehended from the facility of resuming the delegated power, the multitude have conferred on their temporary magistrates. In short, as civil liberty, in democratic states, is apt to degenerate into licentiousness, though it is enjoyed in the highest degree of perfection when that does not happen, yet it is held by so precarious a tenure that it is always on the verge of ruin. Intestine commotions, or foreign wars, unsettle it; and when once the band is loosened, which holds republics together, by the tie of common affection and united interests, it is their usual fate, either to fall a prey to ambitious fellow citizens, or to submit to a foreign yoke. By either of which catastrophes, they pass from the essence of liberty, to the dregs of slavery..

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THE rejection of the three forms of government which prevailed most generally in remote ages, and which still subsist in many parts of the world, follows of course; and we must now endeavour to establish a criterion by which we may be enabled to decide our favourite question impartially; and as I cannot do this in clearer terms, I shall take the liberty to cite a proposition of irresistible force, in the words of BURLAMAQUI.

“ THE height of human felicity and prudence is to know how to guard against those two enemies to civil liberty, TYRANNY and LICENTIOUSNESS: the only method is to have a well constituted government, formed with such precautions as to banish licentiousness, and yet be no way introductive to tyranny.”

LET us now add an amendment to our contested point; and ask--- What form of government it is, that approaches the nearest to this perfection?

THE resolution of this question, will enable us finally to decide, which is the best system of policy now subsisting among all the different nations of the earth; regard being had to the fallibility of all human institutions.

IT may here be necessary to observe, that political writers have distinguished the three forms of government of which we have been treating, by the general title of simple governments; and that no other were known till the final subversion of the Roman empire.

SOON after this great event, compound governments were introduced generally into all parts of Europe; and to one of these we are indebted for the outlines of the British constitution; to the origin and nature of which I desire your closest attention; for under this head we shall find our main question resolved.

ORIGIN

ORIGIN OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION was originally formed upon the model of the little, separate, independent governments, which subsisted among the German nations, after the dissolution of the Roman empire; and these were founded on a strict scrutiny into the advantages and disadvantages which had been experienced in each of the three general forms of government, that had prevailed in all parts of the world.

FROM a digest of the political laws of each, some German states, framed a new form of government, being a compound of MONARCHY, ARISTOCRACY and DEMOCRACY; which gave it originally the title of a COMPOSITE system: afterwards, the Gothic nations having adopted it, writers of those days gave it the name of the GOTHIC BALANCE; but, in modern times, it has been more universally known and understood, by its proper definition, MIXED OR REGULATED MONARCHY.

As a more ample account of the institution and progress in Europe, of a form of government to which we stand indebted for so many invaluable rights and privileges, I imagine must be highly acceptable to all the admirers and true friends of our excellent constitution, I have selected, from the best authorities, the following concise narrative of the primitive German states.

THE continent of Europe has for many ages exhibited almost as many systems of government, as it contains separate states and kingdoms. The governments, which antiently prevailed in Italy, Gaul, Germany and Spain, before those countries were conquered by the Romans, were all democratical or republican. Though the natives were not possessed of the philosophy, learning or manners of the Greeks, yet they resembled them in their aversion to the government of a single person; for they exploded monarchy.

ALL the Asiatic, or eastern nations, on the contrary, appear either never to have had, or very early to have lost, all ideas of any other but despotic governments. The little political knowledge they were masters of, was not sufficient to enable them to refine on this rude, barbarous system, to which, either by consent, or compulsion, successive generations had tamely submitted.

THIS political contrast between the nations of Europe and Asia, cannot be accounted for in any other way, but by admitting, that the genius and temper of mankind are regulated in a great degree by the climates; and therefore, that they must be extremely different in the various regions of the earth; so that physical causes must concur to produce that distinction of taste, in arts, policy and manners, which has so generally prevailed in the world *.

It should seem, that the people inhabiting the warm and soft climates of the east and south, ever prefer indolence and quiet to all other considerations; and rather than be active in the maintenance of their natural rights, tamely submit, upon any tolerable prospect of present safety and protection, to bear the yoke of arbitrary government. Content with a small provision for their immediate wants, and more afraid of labour than of poverty, they do not arraign the authority or conduct of their rulers; nor are they solicitous to enquire, upon what foundation the public interest is built.

BUT the northern nations, bred in a sharper air, and more ungrateful soil, are rendered vigorous in body and mind, by the constant exercises of the powers of both for their subsistence; and thus they become bold and enterprising, grasping every acquisition that may serve as a supply against want. What they gain by toil, or peril of their lives, they are anxious to secure; and dread even the restraints of civil government, unless the defence and care of the property of individuals be made the public concern.

THE Greeks partook of this active and industrious spirit, though

* THE genius of political wisdom, and of civil arts, appears to have chosen his seats in particular tracts of the earth; and to have selected his favourites in particular races of men.

Ferguson on the History of Civil Society.

their

their climate was more contiguous to Asia than any other in Europe. Their soil, in many places, was not very fertile; and the whole domain they possessed, was of no great extent; besides, it was separated and disunited by seas, rivers, and rugged mountains, which rendered a general intercourse extremely difficult, and naturally divided them into a number of small states; the proper nurseries of republican governments.

As they excelled other nations in all works of genius and invention, so were they equally distinguished for their love of civil liberty; which however, spread no farther into the continent of Asia, than the colonies they planted on its coasts.

THIS short digression was necessary to illustrate our subject, to which I now return.

WHEN the Gothic nations extended their conquests over Europe, the officers and soldiers of their armies shared the conquered territories, as well as the chieftains. The victorious general, claimed only a larger portion of the lands, with some splendid designation for himself; while the bulk of property was distributed among the captains of his troops, who, retaining the use of arms, were readily arrayed to defend it from foreign attacks; and were careful, in time of peace, to guard it, by public laws and statutes, from all domestic usurpation.

UPON this basis, arose the Gothic governments, formed, like Nature's handy-work, with amazing boldness and symmetry; the principles of the antient policy appearing to be reversed in them; and by a combination of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, generally held to be inconsistent, a new system, partaking of the advantages of each of them, was established.

THE division of the supreme power soon followed that of the property, thus shared among the several orders of the community.

THE DUKE, or PRINCE, the PEERS, and, in process of time, the heads, or what we now call the REPRESENTATIVES of the commons, composed one LEGISLATURE.

THIS compound system of government was brought over to England, from Germany, by the Saxons.

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THUS

THUS have I given the true origin of the BRITISH CONSTITUTION; and the same may be said of us, with respect to this constitution, as is observed with regard to arts, manufactures and commerce: "That our genius for improving any design laid before us, is truly characteristic."

THE model upon which we formed our admired system of polity, in its rough, Gothic frame, presented us the following outlines, or plan of a regular government.

EACH little Germanic state consisted of a KING or supreme CHIEF; a number of inferior chiefs; and the people, or commons in general.

IN ordinary affairs, the KING consulted with the chiefs, or such of them as he thought fit to call to his council; but in the great affairs of state, such as making laws, consulting about peace or war, trying of great causes, &c. the whole body of the people, at the desire of their sovereign, assembled together in arms.

THE KING and the CHIEFS consulted together, and resolved---the PEOPLE approved or disapproved---they testified approbation by the clattering of their arms---and disapprobation, by an harsh, inarticulate murmur. In the first case, the resolution of the king and his nobles was carried into execution---in the last, it was always dropped or suspended.

FROM hence proceeds the different words made use of in our antient writs or summons to parliament. The PEERS are summoned *ad consulendum*; the commons, *ad consentiendum*.

FROM hence, likewise, proceeds the custom, still subsisting, of shewing our dislike by hissing; and our approbation, by making a noise with our feet and hands.

THE GOVERNMENT was principally lodged in the king; and the exercise of the government, in the KING, and such of his CHIEFS as he was pleased to call to his council. The LEGISLATIVE power was in the hands of the people; and also, the power of trying and punishing the GREATEST offenders; and as they had a legal and effectual method of exercising this power, in their general assemblies, it follows, that these were FREE governments.

THIS

THIS mixed form of government, prevailed almost every where in Europe, for many generations. But as there is no such thing as perfect stability, or uniformity to be expected in any of the affairs of mankind, so the European governments do not now bear such resemblance to one another, as they did in antient times, or even some centuries since.

VARIOUS causes have concurred to change the political face of Europe; to smooth, here and there, the rough features of liberty, with which it was formerly marked; or altogether to obliterate them. The variable policy and artifices of courts; the fluctuation of manners; divisions about systems, political and religious; the advancement of arts, navigation, and commerce; the introduction of wealth and luxury, have produced many alterations.

By the influence of these and other causes, the temper and spirit of the several nations of Europe have undergone a remarkable change; and consequently, the springs and principles of the antient policy are generally relaxed and varied. The modern republics are, therefore, not like those of antient Greece; formed upon principles of virtue and heroism, and regulated by it. Our absolute monarchies retain nothing more of the old Gothic system; but the nominal rank and order of nobles, together with certain constitutional forms of law and judicature. The limited ones, which have preserved the best modifications of it, and afford the fullest enjoyment of civil liberty, are exposed, by the disuse or neglect of arms, to be insulted from abroad; while the growing arts of luxury and corruption, much impair and endanger their domestic privileges.

IT is not necessary, however, for my design, to run through all the various regulations and improvements of the original plan, from which we deduce our happy constitution; it is better to refer the curious to the many valuable histories of our country, now extant.

MY business is, to shew, wherein the excellency of the British constitution consists; to demonstrate its superiority to all others in the known world; to prove that it is founded on the true principles of the

LAW of NATURE and of NATIONS ; and that, whenever any inconveniences have arisen from it, or any violent revolutions ensued, they have been owing to a deviation from its principles ; and a declination to one or other of the more imperfect forms of government already delineated.

UPON the whole, I hope to make it appear, that its real imperfections, of which it has less than any other system of polity, are such only as are inseparable from every human institution, which must partake, in some degree, of the fallibility of our nature ; for, *humanum est errare.*

ON THE
PECULIAR ADVANTAGES
OF THE
BRITISH CONSTITUTION

IT is evident, from what has already been advanced, that our constitution is a form of government compounded of the DEMOCRATICAL, ARISTOCRATICAL, and MONARCHICAL powers; rejecting the disadvantages, and preserving the advantages of each*.

Now its excellency consists in such an equal mixture of these three powers, as that no ONE of them shall be able to direct the other two, and by over-ruling, to destroy them: nor yet, that any TWO of them should unite and combine, to enslave, or ruin the THIRD.

To preserve this happy equality, is the great political business of all real PATRIOTS.

THIS is not to be done by any regulations that the greatest human foresight and prudence can at once contrive or establish; for as power is in its own nature unsteady, and always sinking or rising, and our constitution is compounded of three distinct powers, there always has been, and, while it endures, there always will be, a contest, more or less animated, between these three, either for superiority or equality; which contest is so far from being a misfortune, that in this, the very life and spirit of the constitution triumphantly exists.

* All that know any thing of Britain, know that the government of it is a mixed, limited monarchy, where the supreme power is divided between the king and people, i. e. the lords and commons, since he can neither raise money, nor make, or annul laws without them: and those laws are a rule to both; a common measure to him of his power, and to them of their obedience. The government is called a monarchy, because that kind is predominant in the constitution: the king having his share in the supreme power; and the chief, executive part, or administration, is singly in him.

Lord Somers's Tracts.

IT is this contest, springing from mutual jealousy, that has often frustrated the dark designs of cruel, tyrannic PRINCES; of ambitious, profligate NOBLES; of turbulent, seditious, venal COMMONS: and has made many a rapacious minister, and many a rebellious subject, finish his life upon a block, or in a halter.

NOR has it spared the throne itself; for, by a peculiar felicity attending the different revolutions that have happened in England, the balance, at the expence of the crown, has always been on the side of liberty: and the rights and privileges of the people have been but the more firmly established, in consequence of arbitrary measures, tending to subvert them.

IT is on this account, that the repeated exertions of national spirit, opposed to lawless and tyrannical government, which distinguish the annals of this country, will be admired and applauded in all free nations, as long as any genius for political freedom exists upon earth.

A SYSTEM of government, in which the power of the prince, and the rights of the people are justly poised, has been the happy result of the patriotic struggles of our ancestors, to preserve and improve the antient constitution of the realm. In this system, the fundamental powers of legislation, judicature, and the execution of the laws, are wisely disjointed from each other: the nobles and the commons have separate bodies, which regularly assemble, to deliberate and decide on all national and public concerns; where the voice of the nation must be heard and regarded, if the king's ministers really oppress the subjects.

THOUGH the human imagination incessantly hunts after novelties, and visionary schemes of policy attract and flatter it more than any that ever did, or can exist in any state, yet, even with the fairest of those productions of fancy, fabricated in the studies of the learned, in different ages and countries, the British government, in its genuine purity, may be compared; and as a model of public liberty, and sovereign authority conjoined, and guarded from excess on either part, by the strongest political limitations, it will be found to rival the best of them.

THE most celebrated political writers, appear to be so sensible of this truth,

truth, that they have forsaken the old custom of devising chimerical plans of government, and instead of amusing us with schemes which are barely possible, they analyze such forms as have generally prevailed amongst mankind; and give us their opinion, which deserves the preference.

THUS in that most elaborate and universally admired work, MONTESQUIEU'S SPIRIT OF LAWS, we find the form of the British government exactly delineated, and given as a compendium of the most exalted ideas of public freedom, and national felicity.

SUCH indeed is the comparative excellence of that happy constitution, which the invincible spirit of a free people has firmly established in Great Britain, that it extorts applause from the subjects of the most despotic powers; whose partiality, or fondness for the forms of government they live under, cannot restrain their admiration of ours, from breaking forth, as it were involuntarily, in their writings and conversations.

BUT when this political system is considered by Britons as their birth-right, and as a splendid monument of the virtue and integrity of their ancestors, can any study be proposed of more importance; can any science appear of greater moment, than that of its superior dignity, and of the ways and means by which it is to be preserved and transmitted, unimpaired, to future generations?

No better method can be adopted to mitigate party-prejudices, to restrain and check the growth of disaffection and discontent, and to unite the minds of men in one general political creed, than a full and perfect comprehension of the peculiar advantages they enjoy from an equal mixture of sovereign authority, and popular freedom, in our constitution.

THE contrary opinions, and unbecoming warmth so apt to prevail in free countries, on the subject of public administration, would be converted into sober, deliberate reflection, and consistent conduct; and no sinister views would be blended with patriotism, if our youth were early made acquainted with the principles of the policy and laws of their country.

SUCH

SUCH a branch of education is not only connected with, but must strongly promote the love of their country; and feed the flame of undaunted valour: it will revive and support declining virtue; and will train up a race of loyal subjects, and honest citizens, who will be able to combat the arguments, and frustrate the designs of the factious; to remove the prejudices of the weak and ignorant; to distinguish real from pretended grievances; to state the conduct and designs of those who are at the helm of government, with judgment and impartiality, in all popular assemblies; and it will inspire them with fortitude to stand forth, at the peril of their lives, in the just defence of the religion, laws, liberty, and laudable customs of their country, when they are actually endangered by foreign enemies, or domestic oppressors.

It is with a view to these important purposes, that I have undertaken to make the science of politics, and of the British constitution, as the most material branch of it, a regular, easy, beneficial accomplishment; and that I may not swell this Treatise to an unnecessary length, I shall only give the general principles of the constitution, leaving it to the care of the assiduous student to apply them to the history of his country, particularly of its revolutions; and to the state of public affairs, as they pass in review before him.

OUR constitution giveth to the sovereign the glorious power of commanding freemen; and to the subjects, the satisfaction of seeing this power so lodged, as that their liberties are secure; and thus it reconcileth dominion and liberty: the latter of which can never be lost, but by the degeneracy of the people. So true is the maxim of that great statesman LORD BURLEIGH, minister to queen Elizabeth. "England can hardly ever be ruined but by her own parliaments;" that is to say, by the representatives of the people in parliament. It follows, therefore, that the free, uncorrupt election of proper representatives, is the basis of the liberty of the people; that on this alone depends those limitations of the regal authority, which give our form of government the title of a regulated, mixed monarchy; and that herein lies its superior excellence.

THE

THE necessity of drawing the line with great accuracy between the prerogatives and obligations of the sovereign, and the rights of the people, must be so obvious, from the daily altercations, gross misrepresentations, and absurd reasonings on both, which we meet with in our public prints, that I imagine it will not be unacceptable to see these points clearly, distinctly, and impartially stated, under two separate heads; and as I shall deduce all the arguments I advance on these delicate subjects, from the principles of the constitution, I shall only give a cursory review, in this place, of the peculiar advantages we derive from the judicious choice we have made of the best maxims of the monarchical, aristocratical and democratical forms of government.

THE PREROGATIVES, and the personal safety of the KING, are secured by that wise and salutary maxim, "The king can do no wrong" ---and the rights and privileges of the people are assured, by that equally wise and salutary maxim, "That the king's express order" shall not excuse a subject for acting contrary to law; nor put a stop "to, or prevent the effects of an impeachment in parliament."

THE law of nature would never suppose, that a father could do wrong to his own family, over whom he had indeed a more extensive power, than is allowed to our kings; but no command of the father, however express, could excuse his family for violating the first principle of sociability---"That of not injuring another, in his person, his "reputation, or his property."

BUT as the prerogatives of a king are various and important, he must, of necessity, commit the exercise of some of them, to chosen servants; and if these invade the rights of his subjects, and he protects and screens them from justice, in that case, it is agreeable to the law of nature, and to the laws of England, that HE should be punished for this usurpation of illegal authority---that their crimes be imputed to him---and in this situation, he becomes as a private man; for, having exceeded his regal prerogative, he can no longer take shelter under the political maxim, "That a KING can do no wrong," as he has forfeited the title, by violating the compact which confirmed it to him, and cannot thereafter be considered as a public character.

So in the state of nature, if a father of a family had delegated his authority to servants, who beat, or killed his children, or defrauded them of their property, and had proved so unnatural as to protect and screen such servants from the hand of justice, he would no longer have been considered as a father, but as a petty tyrant; an invader of the common rights of humanity; one, fit only to herd with the beasts of the forest, and to reside in a solitary desert; the outcast of human society!

By our having a monarchy, which though elective in point of right, is yet hereditary by custom, and not set aside, but for legal incapacities, we avoid the fatal disputes, and violent commotions, about the choice of a king, or chief governors; which often distract, and sometimes destroy, democracies, aristocracies, and elective monarchies.

By the MONARCHICAL part of our constitution, we enjoy another advantage over republican states.

As the executive part of our government, especially with regard to foreign affairs, is intrusted with the king only, we thereby avoid the inconveniences and dangers which flow from the openness and delays of popular councils.

In all cases of great and sudden danger, the king becomes, of course, invested with a dictatorial power; and he even dispenses with established laws, for the public safety. In such cases, the parliament, as soon as assembled, will certainly approve of what was prudently and necessarily done: but as this power is extremely dangerous to the constitution, and no true principle, or part of it, it is never to be exercised, but in cases of extreme necessity; the exercise of it must not be continued a moment longer, than the emergency exists that required it; and the ministry or council advising this measure, must be responsible to parliament, for the actual necessity of the case.

JUST apprehensions of an approaching famine;

THE immediate danger of the plague;

THE discovery of a conspiracy or rebellion against the king, or the state;

THE breaking out of a general conflagration; and,

THE invasion of a foreign enemy; are the principal events, which,
in

in the opinion of able politicians, establish the necessity of having recourse to this alarming expedient.

By the ARISTOCRATICAL part of our constitution, we are secured against the ambition of our kings, as well as of private men; and the spirits of the people may be supported under the greatest misfortunes.

OUR NOBLES, by their birth and rank, are entitled to very great privileges and pre-eminence; therefore, they are, in an especial manner, bound by honour and self-interest, to preserve our constitution; and must, upon all occasions, be extremely jealous of every step that may tend towards its overthrow.

By their education they are, or ought to be, well versed in the science of man; in the mysteries, or hidden arcana of state affairs; and the rudiments of political wisdom: from all which favourable circumstances, it is imagined, they will always be able to make a timely discovery of every imminent danger, that threatens the subversion of the constitution; and they are bound by the strongest ties of honour and interest, upon all such occasions, to preserve the just balance between the prerogatives of the prince, and the rights of the people: for, whenever either has preponderated, HISTORY will inform them, that the nobles have suffered both in dignity and estate.---Witness the troubles in the reigns of JOHN, and CHARLES I.

EQUALLY excellent is the popular, or democratical part of our constitution; happily blended as it is with the two former. The power of the people in making their own laws, and in calling their governors, under the king, to account, is established in the most fixed and permanent manner; and is a check upon the monarchical and aristocratical part of our constitution, which no other country can boast.

OUR people are not obliged to submit to any law, which has not been approved by their representatives; nor can any law be altered or repealed, but by their consent.

THE people have a right of assembling out of parliament, to instruct their representatives; and these again, have a power in parliament, to call the greatest subject to account; and to prosecute his punishment even unto death. They have also the privilege to petition the KING

for redress of grievances; and to remonstrate with him, on the maladministration of public affairs: but this is a right of so delicate a nature, that it is liable to great abuse.

DECENTLY exercised, with proper decorum, and only on important and warrantable occasions, it gives life to our laws, and social liberty to the meanest subject.

IMPROPERLY used, it gives pain to the prince, divides the nobles, obstructs the administration of government, and spreads sedition and faction among the people.

BUT conducted with temper, by men of sound judgment, unblemished characters, and due rank and influence; the power of petitioning the throne to remove evil counsellors, and of impeaching great men in high offices, has been deemed an equal security to the king and the people.

THE most effectual method however, of exercising the fundamental rights of calling the king's ministers to account, is by IMPEACHMENT in parliament: and indeed, sufficient matters for impeachment ought to be in readiness, attended with proper evidence to support the articles of accusation, before a petition or remonstrance is carried up to the throne; for if, after a rejection of such applications to the king, which cannot fail of being very disagreeable, because they arraign his judgment in the choice of his servants, no articles of impeachment are presented to parliament, it gives room to imagine that the prayer of petitions and remonstrances is not founded on facts, but on ill-grounded murmurs of the people, and ambitious or selfish views of party-leaders. It is in vain to urge that ministerial influence will prevail in parliament, when petitions and remonstrances are not favourably answered: this can be no argument against the exhibition of articles of impeachment of guilty ministers; for though they should be rejected, or the criminal be acquitted by court-interest, yet the charges would stand on record against them, in an authentic manner; and their opponents would be incontestably justified in the opinions of all honest men.

THE democratical, or most beneficial part of our constitution, depends entirely on the free choice of the representatives of the people:
free,

free, uninfluenced, unbought elections, are its only security. For, if no selfish view predominates, the people of England have the good sense to know, that it is necessary for the security of their lives and fortunes, to chuse men of integrity and abilities. If however, bribery, in any form or shape, prevails, let the people remember, that their balance in the constitution is overset by themselves; and they have no reason to complain of the constitution itself, nor of the conduct of their representatives, be it ever so repugnant to the good of their country.

To avoid every undue influence at elections, various methods have been proposed, but none adopted: the mode of election by ballot, has often been strongly recommended, and as warmly opposed; but with no sufficient weight of argument, to counterbalance the expediency of such a disinterested, candid mode of election: and it is still the more surprizing that it is not adopted, in a case wherein the public welfare is so deeply concerned; when, at the same time, it is recommended and practised upon various occasions of less moment, as the only means of procuring impartial votes*.

THE liberty of the press is another invaluable privilege, demonstrative of the excellency of our constitution.

THE freedom with which people publish their sentiments on public men and measures, is a great curb to ambitious and corrupt ministers; and has most assuredly been the means, more than once, of preserving the constitution of the kingdom.

THIS sacred right is secured to us, by another; for as it frequently happens, that false zeal, erroneous opinions, or selfish views may induce men to abuse the liberty of the press, and to turn libellers; and on the other hand, weak and wicked ministers, may commence criminal prosecutions against those, who dare to arraign their conduct in print, the laws of our country have provided the just means of punishing the guilty, and of protecting the innocent.

* THE elections of the officers and members of the Royal Society, and of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, and their decisions of premiums, bounties, &c. are all by ballot: in many other respectable bodies the same method is pursued, and no inconveniences have hitherto arisen, to bring it into disrepute.

No man can be legally tried for this, or indeed any other offence, but by a jury of his peers, or equals.

HOWEVER therefore, crown-lawyers, and despotic judges, may have presumed to take upon themselves to determine on the nature of any crime, certain it is, "That the jury alone, have the right of this determination; and a jurymen who gives it up, on any pretence, is a traitor to his country."

THE equal distribution of justice, prescribed by the laws of England, which pay no personal regard to any man, is another perfection derived from the right of free representation; and the power vested in the people to make their own laws.

So little is this great benefit attended to, that very few, except those who have travelled Europe, perceive the value of it. Yet it is a certain truth, that in all other governments, the laws partially favour persons of high rank; and, by certain privileges annexed to their birth and titles, screen them from punishment, when they oppress and injure the common people.

LITTLE more need be urged to convince my countrymen, of the preference justly due to our constitution, beyond all others in the habitable world: but it would be almost unpardonable not to mention the HABEAS CORPUS act; as this grand bulwark of the personal liberty of every individual in the realm, is peculiar to Great Britain, and is of itself sufficient to justify our opinion; that the form of government we live under, is the best calculated to answer the great end of the institution of civil societies; to provide for the security, ease and prosperity of every individual, by the power, wisdom and equity of the state.

I SHALL, therefore, proceed to the next thing proposed; which was to ascertain, from the principles of the constitution, the prerogatives and obligations of a king of Great Britain.

ON THE
PREROGATIVES AND OBLIGATIONS
OF A
KING OF GREAT-BRITAIN.

IN all our enquiries concerning the best constituted and most perfect form of government, or which is the most excellent of all national settlements, there are three things that demand our particular and chief attention:

1. AUTHORITY,
2. LAW,
3. LIBERTY;

FOR those governments undoubtedly deserve the preference, wherein justice and liberty are firmly maintained and supported, by the strength of a well regulated authority.

THESE three grand pillars of all wise governments, are so regularly disposed in the British constitution, that were no attempt made to displace them, they would uphold the most noble edifice that was ever reared, the most splendid monument of human genius that was ever exhibited, till the final dissolutions of all things.

BUT unhappily, the ambition, or imbecility of the princes who have swayed the sceptre of the British empire, and the licentiousness of the people, have alternately impaired the pillars of the constitution; and sometimes have shaken the whole stately fabric to its very foundation.

CONVULSIONS of this kind have been lately felt; and while I am writing, the symptoms of our political disease still remain, but the fits are

are neither so frequent, nor so violent; perhaps an impartial analysis * of the prerogatives and obligations of British sovereigns, and of the rights, privileges and duties of British subjects, may contribute to allay the heat of misguided popular zeal, on the one hand; and to cool the ardour for extending royal prerogatives, on the other. It may likewise have another happy effect; that of pointing out the method of applying a radical cure, by a clear discovery of the primary cause of the declining state of our political constitution.

THESE, at least, are the honest views of the author: animated by the love of his country, and regardless of all other applause, but that which virtue and honour may freely accept; and which none but the truly just and good can bestow.

To mark the bounds of authority on an exact map of our constitution, to ascertain the lawful prerogatives of the sovereign, and to balance the scales of justice, are the objects of this division of his Treatise on the Elements of Politics; and to fix the standard of civil liberty shall be no less his care, in the next.

In describing the prerogatives and authority of the crown, it will be necessary to make a distinction between that power which is vested in the crown, by the true principles of the constitution; and that which it has since acquired by accident, or by the subtilty of ministers.

THE first, we shall find to be the lawful REGAL power of the crown:

THE last, the usurped MINISTERIAL power of the crown.

THE exercise of the first, tends to the preservation of our happy form of government, in its genuine purity.

THE undue influence of the last, to its decline, and final dissolution.

FROM the antient histories and law tracts of this kingdom, it appears, that the power of the crown did not formerly consist, so much, in the naming of all the officers employed in the executive departments of government, as in the commanding and directing them, after they were named by the people; and this is certainly most agreeable to that maxim of our constitution, which supposes that "the

* THIS term is introduced here in the sense given to it by Arbuthnot. "A separation of a compound body into its several parts."

“ king can do no wrong;” because if the king’s orders are contrary to law, it is the duty of the officer to whom they are directed to inform him thereof; and he not only may, but ought to refuse to execute them; and if, in such cases, he neglects, through indolence, fear, or venality, to give the king proper information; or if he executes any improper orders; it is not the king, but the officer, who, by this salutary maxim, “ does the wrong;” and he only is punishable for it.

THE intention of this political rule certainly is, to put it out of the power of the king to do wrong; and to prevent him from obtaining the execution of arbitrary, illegal commands. It should seem, however, that this design cannot be answered, unless the inferior officers of state are nominated either by the people, or by the REGAL power of the crown: for when men are appointed to them by the MINISTERIAL power of the crown, that is to say, by one or two chief ministers and favourites, it is greatly to be presumed, that they will choose only such men, amongst their own friends and dependants, as shall be fit to carry into execution any ministerial plans whatever.

OUR ancestors, duly sensible of this truth, vested in the crown only the right of nominating the chief officers of state; while they reserved to themselves the privilege of electing all of inferior rank.

“ THE present actual (ministerial) power of the crown, in giving
“ places, pensions and reversionary grants, in the degree and manner,
“ and to the persons in which, and upon whom, they are every day
“ lavishly bestowed, is not an inherent original right of the crown,
“ but a manifest abuse of part of the royal prerogative, and subversive
“ of the principles of the constitution: if some effectual means be not
“ made use of to restrain this power, and reform its abuses, it must
“ end in the destruction of liberty, and the establishment of despotism*.”

HAVING thus drawn the line between the regal and ministerial power of the crown, in one instance, to illustrate my present subject, I shall proceed to ascertain the inviolable, indispensable, regal prerogatives, which no time or circumstance can alter, because they are a

* THOUGHTS on the Constitutional Power and Right of the Crown, in the Bestowal of Places and Pensions. London, printed for G. Kearsly, 1772.

part of the constitution itself, and all the subjects of the realm are bound to maintain them; for they are essential to sovereignty. I shall place them in the most natural order in which they follow and are dependant on each other, without regard to precedents.

THE FIRST regal prerogative of the crown, respects RELIGION. The British constitution has wisely lodged the supremacy of all ecclesiastical concerns in the king; who is therefore stiled the supreme head of the church; and though he cannot prescribe any particular religion or alter that which is established by law, yet it is his undoubted prerogative to superintend the national religion, to determine all ecclesiastical causes in person, or by his substitutes, and to nominate all the superior officers of the church of England, as archbishops, bishops, &c. He has likewise a right to command a due observance of the principal duties of the Christian religion; and a regular administration of its sacraments and ordinances.

THE SECOND prerogative of the crown, regards the laws of the country, for the good government of the people, in their domestic concerns.

THOUGH the king of Great Britain cannot enact laws by his own authority, he has a right to recommend such as appear to him to be salutary; and accordingly we find him exercising this prerogative in his speeches from the throne, and by messages during the sessions of parliament. That, which recommended the Bill for better regulating the future Marriages of the Royal Family, now passed into a law, is the most recent example we have of the use and exercise of this prerogative; and is sufficient to remind us, that all laws do not originate in the two houses of parliament; some being suggested by the crown.

THE THIRD prerogative is the right of putting a negative on proposed laws, after they have been carried through both houses; by which the king, though not invested, strictly speaking, with a legislative power, has a right very nearly allied to it; for, by virtue of his regal authority, he can prevent the enacting of any new laws, if they appear to be detrimental to himself or his people; and it must be mentioned, to the honour of the sovereigns of the house of Hanover, that

that they have never abused this great prerogative, by withholding the royal assent from any proposed law for the benefit of their subjects.

THE FOURTH prerogative inherent in the crown is, the execution of the laws; in virtue of which right, the king appoints the judges, high sheriffs, justices of the peace, and other civil magistrates; with this exception, where the right of electing some magistrates has been vested by any of his royal predecessors in corporations, by charters, since confirmed to them by acts of parliament; in this case, the elections to magistracy are popular, the citizens qualified by the laws of the corporation being the rightful electors of their own officers. Thus the lord mayor, aldermen, recorder, and sheriffs of London, are chosen by the livery of the said city.

“BUT though the judges of the land are chosen by the king, by the advice of his council,” says the great Lord Sommers, by 18 EDW. III. c. 1. “they are so far from depending upon the will of the king, that they swear faithfully to serve the people as well as the king; and to do justice to every man, according to the law of the land, notwithstanding any writs, letters, or commands received from him: and in default thereof, they are to forfeit their bodies, lands and goods, as in cases of treason. QUEEN ELIZABETH, and her counsellors, pressed the judges very hard to obey the patent under her great seal, in the case of Cavendish; but they answered, that both she and they had taken an oath to keep the law; and if they should obey her commands, the law would not warrant them*.”

THE FIFTH regal prerogative is, a power of equity vested in the crown, in order to abate the severity of laws; for, if extremities in contracts, and penalties in penal laws, should be carried to the utmost rigour they would bear, by the letter of them, the most wholesome laws might be converted to the worst of purposes; to favour subtilty, law cunning, oppression and cruelty. Our kings exercise this equitable prerogative by their chancellors; who, on account of this great

* SEE the Judgment of whole Kingdoms and Nations, concerning the Rights, Power and Prerogatives of Kings; and the Rights, Privileges and Properties of the People; by Lord Sommers. London, 1713; reprinted for J. Williams, 1771.

and important power delegated to them by the throne, are stiled lord high chancellors*.

THE SIXTH is, a power to pardon the breach of criminal laws; this prerogative is stiled, by various writers, the brightest jewel of the crown; and it must be so esteemed by every humane prince, because it is a personal exercise of mercy, which often spares the life of a penitent criminal, and restores him to the community; it likewise inspires love and veneration for the sovereign, when it is exercised with discretion and impartiality.

THE SEVENTH is, a right to enforce pecuniary penalties, incurred by violations of the penal laws; and this power is exercised by the officers of his majesty's court of Exchequer; into which all penalties, though levied by justices of the peace, and other inferior magistrates, are returnable.

THE EIGHTH is, the prerogative of coining money, to be the current medium of the exchanges of commodities in our mutual intercourses with each other. The precious metals and copper, being stamped with the royal portrait, are made equal to the nominal value affixed on all the necessaries of life, and on all articles of trade. This is reputed, by many authors, to be the strongest mark of supreme power that can be given; because it includes a right, upon extraordinary conjunctures, of lowering the standard of the current coin, so as to make it inferior to its nominal value. When this is done, the coin of a kingdom is only serviceable at home; and as it will not pass out of the kingdom, such a measure must prove highly detrimental to a commercial nation. Again, let it be observed, that this prerogative has never been abused, since the accession of the illustrious house of Hanover.

THE NINTH is, a power to call together, and to dissolve all national assemblies and synods, or convocations. This prerogative has been so clearly made known, by the late petitions and remonstrances from many parts of the kingdom, for the dissolution of the present parlia-

* THE chancellor hath power to moderate and temper the written law, and subjecteth himself only to the law of nature and conscience. *Cowel.*

ment, and by the repeated refusals of the king to exercise this prerogative, in compliance with the prayers of these petitions, that nothing more need be added on so public a topic of common conversation.

THE TENTH is, a power to create nobility, and to confer all titles of honour and distinction; (those of magistracy in corporate towns excepted) for the king is the fountain of all honour within his realm; and none of his subjects have a right to claim any title by birth, but what his ancestors have obtained or derived originally from the crown: and on the strength of this prerogative, I must affirm, that no subject of Great Britain can assume any title, or wear any badge of honour conferred on him by foreign potentates, unless by express permission from the king, while he remains within his dominions.

THE ELEVENTH royal prerogative, is the right of entering into negotiations and treaties; of declaring war, and of making peace with foreign powers, by and with the advice of his council; this is a right so essential to sovereignty, that it cannot subsist without it*. Princes act a prudent part, when they consult the inclinations and general interests of their people, in affairs of such infinite consequence; but they cannot call this right in question; all that the people of England, the freest country on earth, can do, is to impeach the king's ministers in parliament, if they have advised him to sign dishonourable treaties of peace, or to involve his subjects in unnecessary or unjustifiable wars.

LASTLY, it is the king's prerogative to appoint his own ambassadors, and all other persons whom he thinks proper to invest with public characters, in foreign nations; where they represent him, in the same manner as he represents his people in the eyes of foreign potentates.

THESE are all the essential prerogatives of a king of Great Britain, that I have been able to collect, from a careful review of the best authorities; and there can be no manner of doubt, that the people are bound to support and defend them with as much zeal and integrity as they are to guard the municipal laws of the land, constituted for their peculiar benefit and protection.

* See Grotius de Jure Bel. et Pacis.

BUT there are usurped ministerial prerogatives vested in the crown by accident, and of late years confirmed by corrupt means, which endanger the very being of our excellent constitution; and against which, I am bound in honour, to enter my protest, after having given the preference to this constitution, above all others; because I have proved it to be the most conformable to the principles of the law of nature and of nations.

A LITTLE reflection will soon convince every impartial man in the kingdom, that an extensive power, unknown to the constitution, has imperceptibly stolen upon us, and established itself in a manner equally derogatory to the regal prerogative, and to the rights of the people. Whether this power is exercised by good or bad men, is a matter foreign to the purpose: the truth is, that no such usurped authority ought to subsist; and a comparative view of the system of administration in former times, with that of our days, will serve to demonstrate, that the dignity of the crown, and the just rights of the subject, were more firmly maintained and secured, before this innovation in the management of public affairs took place.

THAT we may be enabled to trace the origin of this national evil, it will be necessary to explain the nature of the duties of those principal state officers,

THE first lord of the treasury; and

THE first secretary of state.

MY reason for taking this method, must be obvious to all who are conversant in state affairs; for they will readily acknowledge that the ministerial power of the crown, which I mean to explode, has been usually exercised by one or other of these officers, though most frequently by the first. To render this observation quite simple to the public in general, permit me to mention, that during the administration of Mr. Pitt *, this power was vested in him as first secretary of state; it has since resumed its usual situation; and now actually resides with the first lord of the treasury.

THE office of lord-treasurer, now executed by commissioners, is to take the care and charge of all the public treasure in the Exchequer;

* Now sunk into Earl of Chatham.

to issue all sums voted by parliament for public uses; to see that the national accounts are properly stated, so as to be laid before parliament when called for; to give in an annual estimate to parliament, of the supplies requisite for the ordinary services of the current year, in time of peace; which is called, the peace-establishment; comprehending all the expences of the civil and military establishments in Great Britain and her colonies: in time of war, he extends this estimate to the extra-supplies that may be requisite for carrying on its extensive operations; and these cannot be calculated with such certainty as the peace-establishment. It has been frequently the custom, of late years, for parliament to grant a vote of credit to the king, by which the first lord of the treasury might be enabled to raise an extraordinary sum, to be applied, on any unforeseen emergency, to the public service*. It also falls to the lot of this officer, or the chancellor of the Exchequer, (an inferior officer, under his controul) to propose to parliament the means of raising these national supplies: besides these powers, he sometimes writes, in his own person, the two offices of first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the Exchequer†. All the offices of the customs and excise are in his gift and disposal; and the officers themselves are all subject to his check and controul: he nominates escheators in every county; and makes leases of all lands belonging to the crown. This is the utmost extent of his authority at the present hour; a great part of which is of modern date, having been acquired by the misfortunes of the state, which have given birth to a swarm of revenue officers, who have extended the ministerial influence of the first lord of the treasury so far, that this officer is now generally considered as the prime minister of Great Britain; for he exercises a plenary power equal to that of the sole minister in other countries; though he

* FORMERLY he was said to have the charge of the king's wealth; but since a certain annual revenue has been settled on the king for life, the funds in the Exchequer are the public treasures of the nation; invested there, to be appropriated to national uses.

† IF the first lord of the treasury is a commoner, he usually holds both posts; but if he is a peer of the realm he cannot, because the chancellor of the Exchequer must be a commoner.---Lord North, being a member of the house of commons, occupies both.

cannot

cannot openly assume a title not warranted by our constitution, and universally abhorred by the nation.

HITHERTO I have been silent concerning the division of the office of lord high-treasurer; and from what I have already advanced, many sensible people may imagine it unnecessary, to mention those nominal officers, the other commissioners, for they only multiply the number of dependants, without lessening the authority of the sole manager. But as some may be inclined to dispute this point, I must be permitted to introduce an anecdote, well authenticated, to put the matter out of doubt.

“ A CERTAIN first lord of the treasury proposed a measure to the board, which was immediately opposed by one of his colleagues: the minister resented the opposition, and intimated that his adversary had no right to dispute his pleasure---‘ Then,’ said the opposing lord, ‘ what do I sit here for?’---‘ To intitle you to receive 1600*l.* *per annum,*’ replied the minister.”

THAT this must always be the case, no man will deny, who reflects that it is in the minister’s power instantly to deprive his colleague of this fine income. He has only to inform the king, that his measures are disconcerted---that one of his colleagues will not draw with him---that it is impossible his majesty’s service should be carried on, “ if those who eat his majesty’s bread, oppose his measures;” and if the minister has his royal master’s confidence, it is very easy to perceive that the colleague will be dismissed.

BUT great as this officer appears to be, on a review of the antient privileges of his station, with all the modern adventitious advantages annexed to it, yet he neither has, nor ought to have, by virtue of his office, any exclusive influence in raising, or any power whatever of appropriating, the public money. His business is only to issue it, under the authority of legal warrants for that purpose: and so jealous have the people formerly been of the assumption of such a power, that we have many instances in our history, of treasurers being called to account for sums wantonly and profusely applied, though issued under the sovereign’s direction.

BUT

BUT this usurped ministerial power, has, of late years, been exercised, by applying public monies to secret services; and no particular account having been demanded in parliament, through the parliamentary influence of the first lord of the treasury, the nation has been obliged to content itself with general accounts of the application of gross sums to public services.

By means then of a skilful appropriation of the public money to secret services, and of the number of places, increased ten fold, with the increase of taxes, (a subject which shall be discussed at large, in the *Treatise on the Elements of Finances*) the first lord of the treasury has been enabled to extend his influence so as to claim the chief, if not the sole administration of public affairs at home and abroad. Now this is contrary to the spirit of our constitution; subversive of its balance, and tends to the destruction of the peace of mind of the sovereign, who submits to be thus manacled: a prince of a generous, noble disposition cannot but perceive, that this is a sure way to render his reign inglorious and unfortunate: for every great and good action the minister will attribute to himself; and all unconstitutional, or unpopular measures, an artful minister will make to recoil on his royal master.

It is therefore a matter of great importance, to trace the origin of this political hydra; that by ascertaining the measures which have been taken to rear the monster, we may form a more accurate opinion, which is most probable; that we shall destroy it, or suffer it to work the destruction of our excellent constitution: but first, let us consider attentively the nature of the office of secretary of state; since we have observed, that the ministerial power of the crown has occasionally been vested in this department.

THE office of SECRETARY OF STATE, was executed by one person, till towards the end of the reign of Henry VIII; at which time it was divided between two: they were both held to have equal authority; and were therefore severally stiled, "principal secretaries of state." The correspondence with all parts of Great Britain, was reckoned a joint concern; but with regard to foreign affairs, their offices were divided into two distinct provinces---the northern and the southern---

by which arrangement, the ministers at the courts of foreign princes, and those residing with us in public characters, from foreign nations, know to which department, the correspondence and concerns of their respective countries are to be addressed. The southern department is the post of most eminence; the line of promotion running from the north to the south. The senior secretary, in point of nomination, having the southern; and the junior, or last appointed, the northern.

THE secretaries of state have a power, as magistrates, to commit persons (by special, but not by general warrants) for treason, and other offences against the state. In their hands, the petitions and requests of private subjects are frequently, and very properly lodged, to be presented to the king; and from them answers may be expected officially from his majesty. One of them is supposed always to attend the court; and, by the king's warrant, to prepare all dispatches, commissions, letters and other writings, not being matters of law, for the king to sign. The office called the paper-office, which contains all the state-papers, such as negotiations, treaties, correspondence with foreign ministers; commissions, and instructions to governors, &c. in short, all matters of state and council, properly appertain to these departments.

THEY, as well as the first lord of the treasury, are PRIVY COUNCELLORS; and a council is seldom, if ever, held without the presence of one of them.

So far the original powers of the secretaries of state accord with those now exercised by these officers: but it has happened of late years, and especially in time of war, that an enterprising, popular man, being vested with the office of principal secretary of state, has been able, from the circumstances of the nation, to monopolize the ministerial power of the crown, and to make even the first lord of the treasury act as his second. We must, therefore, blend these officers together, in our proposed enquiry into the origin and progress of the ministerial power of the crown.

THIS irregular authority, so often assumed, and so constantly exercised with a high hand, is thus accounted for, in an excellent little pamphlet, the author unknown *.--“ Certain great officers of state,

* Ministerial Usurpation displayed. London, printed for J. Griffiths, 1760.

“ such as the secretaries, the first lord of the treasury, &c. by reason
“ of their places, being more immediately about the throne, naturally
“ received applications from such as were candidates for preferment in
“ the disposal of the crown; and when it was found that their recom-
“ mendations or importunities were passports to promotion, the ambi-
“ tious and necessitous, as naturally attached themselves to the persons
“ who held those offices, and implicitly espoused their interests; by
“ which means they enabled them, at length, to gain an ascendancy
“ over the king and people: for these ministers feeling their own
“ strength, and finding that nothing could be granted but through
“ their intercession, began to dictate both to the crown and to parli-
“ ament, and to assume an extraordinary influence in the administration,
“ which our constitution does not authorize.

“ THE history of England affords us melancholy instances of revo-
“ lutions occasioned by this undue influence; and whenever it is exerted,
“ it will always administer occasion for those discontents which some-
“ times burst forth into all the rage of civil commotion. The constitution
“ may, by chance, recover from such violent shocks; but it sometimes
“ (as did ours in the last century) perishes in the struggle.”

IF MINISTERS were to confine themselves within their constitutional sphere of duty, their offices would not be such objects of envy; nor would the moderate power, which they might legally exercise, provoke such furious oppositions as we have seen of late years.

BUT while one or two ministers claim the power of nominating and creating the other great officers of state, under the pretext that “they cannot carry on the king’s business without the aid and support of their own friends in office,” contention will always be kept alive; and we must expect turbulent times, if nothing worse ensues.

HERE then let me impress on your memories, an undoubted truth.

THE usurped ministerial power of the crown is one primary cause of our political distemperature: it has unhinged our constitution: it has given a bias to the balance of power; which may upset its equilibrium.

BUT if the obligations which a king of Great Britain enters into when he ascends the throne, are duly performed, we shall find in one

of them, the proper remedy for this great evil; without having recourse to the democratical power of the constitution.

IN the discussion of a point so delicate as that of the duty of sovereigns, it is impossible to be too much upon one's guard; for the eyes and ears of the numerous dependants on courts, are open to observe, and to scrutinize with extreme minuteness and rigour, every disagreeable sentiment or expression, though founded on maxims of truth, virtue and honour. Besides, presumption and arrogance will be instantly laid to the charge of every private subject, who boldly dares to tell a king--- what he owes to his people. Others there are, who might be inclined to pass over this part of my subject, without deigning to give it a perusal, if they thought the reasoning entirely my own. To prevent, therefore, unjust criticisms on the one hand, and supercilious neglect on the other, I will ingenuously acknowledge, that in what I advance relative to the reciprocal obligations, or commerce of duties, subsisting between sovereigns and their subjects, I follow, almost step by step, those respectable authorities, PUFENDORF and BURLAMAQUI; deviating only from their maxims, where I have found them incompatible with the limitations of the British monarchy, or the political freedom of British subjects.

THE higher a sovereign is raised above the level of other men, the more important are his duties: if he can do a great deal of good, he can also do a great deal of mischief. It is on the good or evil conduct of princes, that the happiness or misery of a whole nation or people depends. How happy is the situation, which, on all instances, furnishes occasions of doing good to so many thousands! But, at the same time, how dangerous is the post, which exposes every moment to the injuring of millions! Besides, the good which princes do, sometimes extends to the most remote ages; as the evils they commit are multiplied to latest posterity. This sufficiently discovers the importance of their duties.

I. THE first general duty of princes, is carefully to inform themselves of every thing that falls under the complete discharge of their trust: for a person cannot well acquit himself in that which he has not rightly learnt.

It is a great mistake to imagine that the knowledge of government is an easy affair; on the contrary, nothing is more difficult, if princes would discharge their duty. Whatever talents or genius they may have received from nature, this is an employment that requires the whole man. The general rules of governing well, are few in number; but the difficulty is to make a just application of them to times and circumstances: and this demands the greatest efforts of diligence and human prudence.

2. WHEN a prince is once convinced of the obligation he is under to inform himself exactly of all that is necessary for the discharge of his trust, and of the difficulty of getting this information, he will begin with removing every obstacle which may oppose it.---And first, it is absolutely necessary, that princes should retrench their pleasures and useless diversions: so far as they may be a hinderance to the knowledge and practice of their duty. Then they ought to endeavour to have wise, prudent, and experienced persons about them; and, on the contrary, to remove flatterers, buffoons, and others, whose whole merit consists in things that are frivolous and unworthy the attention of a sovereign. Princes ought not to choose for favourites, those who are most proper to divert them; but such as are most capable of governing the state.

ABOVE all things, they cannot guard too much against flattery. No human condition has so great an occasion for true and faithful advice, as that of kings: and yet princes, corrupted by flattery, take every thing that is free and ingenuous, to be harsh and austere. They are become so delicate, that every thing, which is not adulation, offends them. But nothing ought they to be so greatly afraid of, as this very adulation; since there are no miseries into which they may not be hurried by its poisonous insinuation. On the contrary, the prince is happy, even if he has but a single subject, who is so generous as to speak the truth of him; such a man is the treasure of the state. Prudent sovereigns, who have their true interests at heart, ought continually to imagine that court-sycophants only regard themselves, and not their master; whereas a sincere counsellor, as it were, forgets himself, and thinks only on the advantage of his master.

3. PRINCES ought to use all possible application to understand the constitution of the state, and the natural temper of their subjects. They ought not, in this respect, to be contented with a general and superficial knowledge. They should enter into particulars; and carefully examine into the constitution of the state, into its establishment and power, whether it be old, or of late date; successive, or elective; acquired by legal methods, or by arms; they should also see how far their jurisdiction reaches; what neighbours are about them; what allies; and what strength, and what conveniences the state is provided with: for, according to these considerations, the sceptre must be swayed; and the rider must take care to keep a stiffer, or slacker rein.

4. SOVEREIGNS ought also to endeavour to excel in such virtues as are most necessary to support the weight of so important a charge; and to regulate their outward behaviour, in a manner worthy of their rank and dignity.

VIRTUE, in general, consists in that strength of mind, which enables us not only to consult right reason, on all occasions, but also to follow her counsels with ease; and effectually to resist every thing capable of giving us a contrary bias. This single idea of virtue is sufficient to shew how necessary it is to all men.

BUT none have more duties to fulfil, none are more exposed to temptations than sovereigns; and none, of course, have a greater necessity for the assistance of virtue. Besides, virtue in princes has this advantage; that it is the surest method of inspiring their subjects with the like principles. For this purpose, they need only shew the way.

THE example of the prince has a greater force than the law. It is, as it were, a living law; of more efficacy than precept. But to descend to particulars:

THE virtues most necessary to sovereigns are first, PIETY, which is certainly the foundation of all other virtues; but it must be a solid and rational piety, free from superstition and bigotry.

IN the high situation of sovereigns, the only motive, which can most surely induce them to the discharge of their duty, is the fear of God.

Without

Without that, they will soon run into every vice which their passions dictate; and the people will become the innocent victims of their pride, ambition, avarice and cruelty.

ON the contrary, we may expect every thing that is good from a prince, who fears and respects God, as a supreme Being on whom he depends, and to whom he must one day give an account of his administration. Nothing can be so powerful a motive as this to engage princes to perform their duty; nothing can so well cure them of that dangerous mistake; that, being above other men, they may act as absolute lords, and as if they were not to render an account of their conduct; and be judged in their turn, after having passed sentence on others.

SECONDLY, The love of EQUITY and JUSTICE. The principal end a prince was made for, is to take care that every one should have his right. This ought to engage him to study not only the science of those great civilians who ascend to the first principles of law, which regulate human society, and are the basis, as it were, of government and politics; but also, that part of the law, which descends to the affairs of particular persons.

PRINCES are continually talked to of valour and liberality; but if justice does not regulate these two qualities, they degenerate into the most odious vices: without justice, valour does nothing but destroy; and liberality is only a foolish profuseness. Justice keeps all in order; and contains within bounds him who distributes it, as well as those to whom it is distributed.

THIRDLY, VALOUR. But it must be set in motion by justice, and conducted by prudence. A prince should expose his person to the greatest perils, as often as it is necessary. This is a virtue which our kings will seldom have occasion to exercise; we hope never: for domestic commotions may Heaven avert! and as for foreign enemies, Great-Britain will never want brave generals and admirals, to keep them at such a distance from the seat of government, as to make it unnecessary for the prince to expose his person.---I shall not, therefore, expatiate on this subject.

FOURTHLY,

FOURTHLY, Another virtue, very necessary in princes, is to be extremely reserved in discovering their thoughts and designs. This is evidently essential to those who are concerned in government. It includes a wise diffidence, and an innocent dissimulation.

FIFTHLY, A prince must, above all things, accustom himself to moderate his desires: for as he has the power of gratifying them, if he once gives way to them, he will run to the greatest excess; and by destroying his subjects, will at last complete his own ruin. In order to form himself to this moderation, nothing is more proper than to accustom himself to patience. This is the most necessary of all virtues, for those who are to command. A man must be patient, to become master of himself, and others. Impatience, which seems to be a vigorous exertion of the soul, is only a weakness and inability of suffering pain. He who cannot wait or suffer, is like a person that cannot keep a secret: both want resolution to contain themselves. The more power an impatient man has, the more fatal his impatience will be to him: he will not wait; he gives himself no time to judge; he forces every thing to please himself; he tears off the boughs, to gather the fruit before it is ripe; he breaks down the gates, rather than stay till they are opened to him.

SIXTHLY, Goodness and clemency are also virtues very necessary to a prince. His office is to do good; and it is for this end, the supreme power is lodged in his hand. It is also principally by this that he ought to distinguish himself.

SEVENTHLY, Liberality, well understood, and well applied, is so much the more essential to a prince, as avarice is a disgrace to a person to whom it costs almost nothing to be liberal. To take it exactly--- A king, as a king, has nothing properly his own; for he owes his very self to others. But, on the other hand, no person ought to be more careful in regulating the exercise of this noble virtue. It requires great circumspection; and supposes, in the prince, a just discernment, and a good taste, to know how to bestow and dispense favours on proper persons --- He ought, above all things, to use this virtue, for rewarding genuine merit.

BUT

BUT liberality has its bounds, even in the most opulent princes. The state may be compared to a family: the want of foresight, profusion of treasure, and the voluptuous inclination of princes, who are the masters of it, do more mischief than the most skilful ministers can repair.

A PRUDENT œconomy, on the contrary, supplies the deficiencies of the revenue, maintains families and states, and preserves them in a flourishing condition. By œconomy, princes not only have money in time of need, but also possess the hearts of their subjects; who freely open their purses, upon any unforeseen emergency, when they see that the prince has been sparing in his expences: the contrary happens, when he has squandered away his treasures.

THUS have I given a general idea of the virtues most necessary to a sovereign; besides those which are common to him with private people; and of which some are included even in those we have been mentioning. Cicero follows almost the same ideas in the enumeration he makes of the royal virtues.

IT is by the assistance of these virtues, that sovereigns are enabled to apply themselves, with success, to the functions of government; and to fulfil the different duties of it.---Let me now add a few remarks concerning the actual exercise of those duties.

THERE is a general rule, which includes all the duties of a sovereign; and by which he may easily judge how to proceed, under every circumstance.--Let the safety of the people be the supreme law.--This ought to be the chief end of all his actions. The supreme authority has been conferred upon him with this view; and the fulfilling of it is the foundation of his right and power. The prince is properly the servant of the public. He ought, as it were, to forget himself, in order to think only on the advantage and good of those whom he governs. He ought not to look upon any thing as useful to himself, which is not so to the state. This was the idea of the heathen philosophers. They define a good prince, one who endeavours to render his subjects happy; and a tyrant, on the contrary, one who aims only at his own private advantage.---I shall, from this general rule, deduce those obligations which are of a more particular nature.

THE functions of government relate either to the domestic interests of the state, or to its foreign concerns.

WITH respect to the domestic interests of the state, the chief care of the sovereign ought to be,

FIRST, To form his subjects to good manners. For this purpose, it is the duty of supreme rulers, not only to prescribe good laws, by which every one may know how he ought to behave, in order to promote the public good; but especially to establish the most perfect manner of public instruction, and of the education of youth. This is the only method of making the subjects conform to the laws, both by reason and custom; rather than through fear of punishment.

2. THE sovereign ought to establish good laws for the settling of such affairs, as the subjects have most frequent occasion to transact with each other. These laws ought to be just, equitable, clear, without ambiguity and contraction, useful, accommodated to the condition and the genius of the people, at least, so far as the good of the state will permit; that, by their means, differences may be easily determined: but they are not to be multiplied without necessity.

3. IT would be of no use to make good laws, if people were suffered to violate them with impunity. Sovereigns ought therefore, to see them properly executed; and to punish the delinquents, without exception of persons, according to the quality and degree of the offence.

IT is even sometimes proper to punish severely at first. There are circumstances in which it is clemency to make such early examples, as shall stop the course of iniquity. But what is chiefly necessary, and what justice and the public good absolutely require, is, that the severity of the laws be exercised not only upon the subjects of moderate fortune and condition, but also upon the most wealthy and powerful. It would be unjust, that reputation, nobility, and riches, should authorize any one to insult those who are destitute of these advantages. The populace are often reduced by oppression to despair; and their fury at last throws the state into convulsions.

SINCE men first joined in civil societies, to screen themselves from
the

the injuries and malice of others, and to procure all the sweets and pleasures which can render life commodious and happy; the sovereign is obliged to hinder the subjects from wronging each other; and to maintain order and peace in the community, by a strict execution of the police-laws; to the end, that his subjects may obtain the advantages which mankind reasonably proposed to themselves by joining in society.

MR. DE LA BRUIERE has a fine passage upon this subject.

“WHAT would it avail me, or any of my fellow-subjects, that my sovereign was successful and crowned with glory, that my country was powerful and the terror of neighbouring nations, if I were forced to lead a melancholy and miserable life, under the burthen of oppression and indigence---If, while I was secured from the incursions of a foreign enemy, I found myself exposed at home, to the sword of an assassin; and was less in danger of being robbed or massacred in the darkest nights, in a thick forest, than in the public streets---If safety, cleanliness, and good order, had not rendered living in towns so pleasant, and had not furnished them not only with the necessaries, but moreover with all the sweets and conveniences of life---If, being weak and defenceless, I were encroached upon in the country, by every neighbouring great man---If so good a provision had not been made to protect me against his injustice---If I had not at hand so many, and such excellent masters, to educate my children in those arts and sciences which will one day make their fortune---If the conveniency of commerce had not made good substantial stuffs for my cloathing, and wholesome food for my nourishment; both plentiful and cheap---If, to conclude, the care of my sovereign had not given me reason to be as well contented with my fortune, as his princely virtues must needs make him with his?”

5. SINCE a prince can neither see nor do every thing himself, he must have the assistance of ministers: but as these derive their whole authority from their master, all the good or evil they do, may be finally imputed to him. It is therefore the duty of sovereigns to chuse persons of integrity and ability for the employments with which

they entrust them. They ought often to examine their conduct; and to punish or recompense them, according to their merits. In fine, they ought never to refuse to lend a patient ear to the humble remonstrances and complaints of their subjects, when they are oppressed and trampled on by ministers and subordinate magistrates.

6. WITH regard to subsidies and taxes, since the subjects are not obliged to pay them, but as they are necessary to defray the expences of the state, in war, or peace; the sovereign ought to exact no more than the public necessities, or the signal advantage of the state, shall require. He ought also to see that the subjects be incommoded as little as possible by the mode of levying the taxes laid upon them. There should be a just proportion in the tax of every individual; and there must be no exception or immunity, which may turn to the disadvantage of others. The money collected, ought to be laid out to supply the exigencies of the state; and not to be wasted in luxury, undeserved pensions, or vain magnificence.

7. IT is the duty of a sovereign to draw no farther supplies from his subjects than he really stands in need of: the wealth of the subjects forms the strength of the state; and the advantage of families and individuals. A king, therefore, ought to neglect nothing that can contribute to the preservation and increase of the riches of his people. For this purpose, he should see that they draw all the profit they can from their lands, seas, commerce, arts, and manufactures; and that they keep themselves always employed in some industrious exercise or other. He ought to further and promote the mechanic arts; and give all possible encouragement to commerce. It is likewise his duty to bring his subjects to a frugal method of living, by good sumptuary laws, which may forbid superfluous expences; especially when the wealth of the natives is translated, by means of excessive luxury, to foreigners.

LASTLY, It is the interest and duty of a supreme governor, to guard against factions and cabals; from whence seditions and civil wars easily arise. But, above all, he ought to take care that none of his subjects place a greater dependance, even under the pretext of superior

superior political talents, on any other power, either within or without the realm, than on his lawful sovereign.

THIS, in general, is the law of the public good, in regard to the domestic interests, or internal tranquility of the state.

As to foreign concerns, the principal duties of the king are,

1. To live in peace with his neighbours, as much as he possibly can.
2. To conduct himself with prudence, in regard to the alliances and treaties he makes with other powers.
3. To adhere faithfully to the treaties he has made.
4. Not to suffer the courage of his troops to be enervated; but, on the contrary, to maintain and augment it by good discipline.
5. In due and seasonable time, to make the preparations necessary to put himself in a posture of defence.
6. Not to undertake any unjust or rash war.

LASTLY, Even in times of peace, to be very attentive to the designs and motions of his neighbours.

HAPPY will be the prince, wherever he reigns, who follows these general principles of obligation on his part; and highly meritorious the subjects, who, animated with a sense of his transcendent goodness, take the greatest care not to infringe his just prerogatives; but, on the contrary, sedulously study to perform all the duties of loyal, good subjects. For, on a virtuous adherence to the reciprocal engagements between sovereigns and their subjects, is founded that national union and concord, which raises the renown, and establishes the prosperity of nations.---And it is to be observed, that every just rule of conduct laid down for princes and subjects in general, is more particularly binding on British kings, and the people they govern.

ON THE
RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES
OF
BRITISH SUBJECTS;
AND THE

Duties they owe their Sovereigns, and their Country.

IN treating of the origin of governments, I have made it appear, that CIVIL LIBERTY was the basis of their institution; and that the freedom of individuals, secured by the wisdom and integrity of the community, was ever the grand object of all wise and honest legislators.

It has likewise been clearly proved, that these maxims are the ground-work of the British constitution; and that its superior excellency in comparison with all other forms of government, consists in the just limitation of the prerogatives of the crown; and the firm security of the freedom of individuals, provided for by the wisdom and integrity of the community.

THESE are the blessings attributed by all foreign writers to the authority of our parliaments; for they are the bulwarks of civil liberty; and it is from the virtuous exercise of the powers vested in these supreme councils of the nation, that we are to look for the full enjoyment of all the advantages derived from the exchange of NATURAL for CIVIL LIBERTY*. And from the same quarter we must expect a dissolution of our happy constitution, if an improper use is made of the important trusts deposited in the hands of the representatives of the people in parliament: for the power of making, altering and repealing the laws, properly exercised, is the rock on which the freedom of this country may stand secure for ages; but if this is perverted to such a

* SEE page 243.

point,

point, that either bad laws are enacted, or the good are not enforced, so that the people may be oppressed with impunity, it is easy to perceive, that it will sap the foundation, and ruin the noble superstructure

FROM CIVIL LIBERTY, the source of the rights of the subjects in all free states, we may deduce the first, the fundamental right of BRITONS, on which all the rest absolutely depends.

1. THE right of representation. This is so clear and indisputable, that, in the most arbitrary reigns, it has never been disputed: but the second right of the people, though as clear and positive, has been so often suspended, infringed or violated at different periods of our history, that it will require a more ample illustration.

2. THE right of an entire freedom in the election of persons, qualified by the laws of the land, to serve in parliament.

THE enjoyment of this right is implied in the very term REPRESENTATIVE; for with what propriety can he be stiled the representative of the people, who is not freely elected and deputed as such by them?

As this freedom of elections has for many ages been deemed a vital part of our constitution, our old laws provided amply for its establishment and security; after many instances had occurred of the bad effects of violating it*. In fact, it is so absolutely essential to the constitution of parliaments, that their acts cannot be valid, nor accounted to be the statutes of the realm, without it.

YET, from the date of MAGNA CHARTA, in the reign of King John, and notwithstanding the subsequent confirmations of it, with additions, under Henry III, and Edward I, this great right was held by precarious tenures, and was never fully ascertained and declared, till the GLORIOUS REVOLUTION; when it was firmly established by the BILL of RIGHTS.

THOUGH much has been said and written concerning this clear and full declaration of the rights and privileges of the people of Great Britain, there seems to be room left for a proper explanation of its

* ELECTIONS shall be freely and duly made—no great man, or other, by force of arms, nor by malice, or menacing, shall disturb any to make free election.

Statutes of Westminster, A. D. 1274.

origin.

origin, importance and good effects; and I am confirmed in this opinion, by the many misrepresentations and errors I have seen in print concerning it: for which reason, as it is the standard of our political freedom, it may not be improper to give an accurate account of the motives for insisting on this declaration at the Revolution---to shew, that, before that æra, the people of this country had not the full enjoyment of their constitutional freedom---to demonstrate that it was firmly established by the bill of rights---and to prove that, if any encroachments have been since made on the rights and privileges therein ascertained, it has been owing more to the misconduct of the people, than to any other cause whatever.

A BRIEF abstract from the History of England, is indispensably requisite in this place; to enable us to draw the line between antient and modern liberty; and it is probable, this exhibition may either make men more temperate, and better satisfied than they in general seem to be, with the present times; or convince them, that the remedy for their distemperature is in their own hands.

BEFORE the Restoration, the people enjoyed little more than the shadow of political freedom. In proof of this assertion, let us review the annals of the preceding dynasty of our sovereigns from the Conquest.

DURING the government of the Norman line, the right of conquest prevailed, which admits no claim of popular freedom; and the people were too much weakened by intestine divisions, to expose themselves to any fresh misfortunes in opposing arbitrary power; their purses were drained, their numbers thinned, and their spirits broken; to add to their misfortune, their sovereigns, intent on fixing a title held by so precarious a right as that of conquest, invited over foreign families, who strengthened the power of the crown, and lorded over the natives; so that, in this situation of affairs, the people submitted to every imposition; being unable either to dispute or to resist the will of these tyrants. It is true, these princes promised their subjects, in order to make them acquiesce under their usurpations, that they would restore those rights and privileges which they enjoyed under the Saxon form of government before the Conquest; but when they were once securely seated in the throne, they forgot all their oaths and fair speeches.

IN the reign of Henry II, the first sovereign of the line of Plantagenet, the power of the crown was more limited; but the people derived no benefit from this circumstance; for while ecclesiastical disputes and family quarrels weakened and disturbed his administration, the grievances the people had laboured under, were continued, through inattention, and the confusion of the court.

To him succeeded that enthusiastical warrior RICHARD I, who exhausted the treasure of his kingdom, and lavished the blood of his subjects, for the greater glory, as he foolishly thought, of God.

IN the next reign, a contest arose between the king and his barons, of little consequence to the people; for the latter, who had tyrannized over them in their respective districts, only wanted to establish an aristocracy, at the expence of royalty; while Richard II, on the other hand, struggled hard to be the sole tyrant of the land.

THE long administration of Henry III. exhibited various scenes: some in favour of an unjust, oppressive king; others equally advantageous to a turbulent nobility; and one in support of an ambitious, pretended patriot, the Earl of Leicester; who procured the institution, in this reign, of the right of representation, as the only security for the liberties and privileges of the people: but no real advantage was gained by this seeming acquisition, for it was only made use of to establish the power of their party-leader.

TO HENRY III. succeeded Edward I, a good man, and a great king---but as I do not mean to advert to any point in any reign, but that alone of civil liberty, I pass over all his glorious military exploits, and only observe---that the power of the crown was not bounded by any act, in favour of the rights of the people; but, at the same time, they had this consolation---it was not abused.

EDWARD III. was a great prince, and England flourished under his administration; but even the glory which his valour acquired, was dangerous to the nation; for though it raised its renown, yet it might have ended in its ruin; for the only difference ultimately between France being conquered by England, or England by France, would have been, that, in the former case, both kingdoms would have been

governed by an English, and in the latter, by a French, king. If the power of England had prevailed, the seat of empire would have been in France, and this country might have groaned beneath the tyranny of a vice-roy; if France had prevailed, it would have been a province to that kingdom: and under either of these situations, there was no prospect of freedom for the people; nor did they experience any advances towards civil liberty in this reign, solely taken up with the ardent pursuits of war and conquest.

RICHARD II. had an opportunity of seeing the spirit of the nation; and, had he taken warning by the bold, but rash attempt, of a tumultuous mob, headed by an intoxicated leader, whose presumption and arrogance overthrew his whole plan, he might have had a prosperous reign: but this struggle for liberty, so badly concerted, and so impolitically conducted, was no sooner ended, than the weak, luxurious monarch, displayed his tyrannical disposition; and the subsequent part of his reign was a series of confusion and oppression; which terminated in his deposition, and the establishment of a sagacious usurper, HENRY IV, of Lancaster, under whom the people were indeed less irritated by domestic oppressions, through the unsettled situation of the crown; which made this prince cautious of offending his new subjects; but they were not more free, for the nation had not a reserved power to limit his disbursements, nor those of his glorious successor HENRY V.

IN the following reign were commenced the fatal disputes between the houses of Lancaster and York; which continued through the reigns of HENRY VI, EDWARD IV, EDWARD V, and RICHARD III, during which long space of more than sixty years, the people were so far from enjoying any freedom, that they never once thought of it; on the contrary, their whole ambition consisted in fighting for a master; and they no sooner got rid of the yoke of one, than they voluntarily submitted to another; so that it was an easy matter for HENRY VII, coming to the crown with a fair title, and the general voice of the nation, to avail himself of the slavish disposition which had pervaded all ranks of the people. He knew they would submit to any imposition, rather than renew the horrors

of

of civil-war; and, being of a most avaricious temper, by a course of injustice, violence and rapine, attended with circumstances of cruelty, from the ministers of his extortions, he made his reign as dangerous and uneasy to himself, as it was odious and oppressive to his subjects.

HENRY VIII. it is well known, governed the kingdom in the most arbitrary manner; by intimidating his counsellors and parliaments, till he made both so entirely subservient to his will and pleasure, that they countenanced, supported, and attempted to legalize every act of public or private cruelty and injustice, he thought proper to commit. Yet to this prince we stand indebted for the foundation on which the noble superstructure of public liberty was erected in after ages; for without the Reformation, this kingdom most probably would still have groaned beneath the weight of ecclesiastical and civil tyranny.

THE pride and weakness of the Protector Somerset, and the wicked ambition of the Duke of Northumberland, successively harassed the kingdom during the short reign of EDWARD VI. But it must not be forgot, that the benefits we derive from the Reformation, we owe, in a great measure, to the Duke of Somerset, who completed the establishment of the church of England.

MARY, a devout woman, but a most execrable tyrant, succeeded her brother; and consigned over her authority to ecclesiastical furies, who daily embued their hands in the blood of her unfortunate subjects. In this reign not a dawn of political freedom appeared; but men were butchered for presuming to claim the natural rights of men---for thinking, speaking and acting according to the dictates of their consciences.

ELIZABETH, her successor, was a princess of a different complexion; with an understanding and intrepidity superior to her sex, she governed her subjects wisely; increased the renown and splendor of her dominions; gave new life to commerce, arts and manufactures, and studied the interest of the body politic; but every step she took for the public welfare, was as absolutely without the consent of the people, as any of the most prejudicial measures in the reigns of her predecessors. She

was fond of prerogative, and carried it to a greater extent than her father; but with the same despotic disposition, she proved an excellent sovereign; for she had the judgment and integrity to make a right use of the power she usurped over the constitution; and the beneficial manner in which she exercised it, silenced all opposition.

SHE invaded the privileges of the people most notoriously; often sending for the speaker of the house of commons, and telling him not only what she would or would not suffer to be done, but also what she would or would not allow to be said: when she wanted money, she told him she would have it; and that there should be no debates on that subject. She ordered her chancellor to inform the house of commons, that they had no right to judge of returns in elections. She imprisoned members of parliament by her own authority---forbid some bills to be read in the house---ordered that others should not be debated there; and refused the royal assent twice, to above thirty bills that had passed both houses. I am the more particular in stating these circumstances, because they must be brought in evidence, to prove that the people of this kingdom knew not the full enjoyment of civil liberty till the Revolution. In other respects, her administration was truly glorious, and cannot be sufficiently extolled.

JAMES I, the pregenitor of the equally unfortunate and undeserving race of STUARTS, succeeded this illustrious queen; of him, and his son, over whose catastrophe we wish to draw a veil, little more need be said, than that, without the abilities of Elizabeth, or either the fortitude or integrity to pursue the national interest, they made it their sole study and employment to keep up the royal prerogative; and foolishly imagined, that the people would submit to the same extension of the ministerial, usurped power of the crown, when exercised in acts tending to the disgrace and total ruin of the kingdom, as they had acquiesced under, when employed for its honour and prosperity.

WITH respect to the administration of CROMWELL, we must do justice to his management of the foreign concerns of the nation; which was never more respected in all parts of the world, than in his time. Commerce, and the political interests of England, were firmly supported

ported by the valour of his arms, and the wisdom of his councils; but domestic liberty suffered very near as much from him and his adherents, as from the man whom he put to death for extending the power of the crown beyond its legal limits. In fact, nothing but the arbitrary conduct of Cromwell, and the long parliament, could have paved the way for the restoration of the son of the very oppressor, who had been deposed by the general voice of the people.

THE RESTORATION of CHARLES II. should have been the æra of political freedom; for a wandering exiled prince, who could have but little hopes of ever ascending the throne of his unfortunate father, would have submitted to almost any conditions, if the negociation had been timely and properly conducted: instead of which, he was conducted to the throne, amidst the misguided acclamations of a nation too fond of the tinsel of majesty, and strongly biased in favour of monarchical government; with the restoration of which, they were so charmed and intoxicated, that they neglected to provide the proper remedies by law against the revival of those grievances which had subsisted in the time of CHARLES I; and if Lord Clarendon had not been a true friend to his country, the restored king would have been enabled to govern without a parliament, at least in time of peace; for it was proposed to settle two millions annually on him for life, to defray the expences of the administration of his government; and to enable him to support the dignity of the crown. By the integrity of this minister, England was once more preserved from despotic rule; and the sun of liberty began to rise; some wise and beneficial laws being made at this time, in favour of the subjects: but this bright effulgence was soon overcast; other men were consulted, and opposite measures pursued; the interest of the king's brother predominated; a storm hovered over the nation, which burst in the following reign, and had nearly accomplished the total dissolution of civil and religious freedom.

JAMES II. having laid the foundation of his conspiracy against the state securely, as he thought, in the life-time of Charles, whom he had persuaded to govern without a parliament for the three last years
of

of his reign, on his own accession threw off the mask, grew impatient for the subversion of the constitution, and the extirpation of the protestant religion; but by the hasty strides he took to arbitrary power, as a means of accomplishing his infamous designs, providentially for these kingdoms, he brought on his own ruin; and that glorious revolution which firmly established those rights and privileges which give to Britons a pre-eminence above the subjects of all other states in the known world.

THE declaration of the rights and privileges of the people, called the BILL OF RIGHTS, which the prince and princess of Orange were obliged to acknowledge and accept, before the crown was tendered to them, effectually drew the line between the regal prerogative and the public liberty of the nation; it settled all those disputable points which had been the objects of warm contention, and the sources of intestine commotions in former times, as the power of the prince or of the people had prevailed at different æras.

THE claims of LIBERTY and PREROGATIVE had been abused both by the sovereigns and the people, as opportunity favoured the arbitrary views of the rulers, or the licentious disposition of the ruled.

ON the one hand, the sovereign had called every thing his prerogative, that his ambition induced him to arrogate to himself; that his strength enabled him to seize; or that either the weakness, or the servility of his subjects, allowed him to possess.

ON the other, whatever encroachments were made by the people on the prerogative, went under the denomination of maintaining their liberties; every point they gained on the crown, stimulated by their own resolution and vigour, or encouraged by the indolence and supineness of the sovereign, was only called asserting antient privileges, and reviving former rights: and thus both king and people were like the two contending parties described by D'AVILA *. The greatest misfortune, therefore, that can happen to a country, under a mixed form of government like ours, is to have the districts of the constituent parts of

* *Come fosse sempre necessario o offendere, o esse offeso*—as if it was always necessary to injure or be injured. *Istoria della guerra civile di Francia.*

that government so indistinctly known or understood, that those who should be the joint promoters of the public welfare, are more concerned about contentions for power and privileges, than for the real interest of the nation, which must always languish and decline during these struggles, fomented by jealousy, ambition, and mercenary views.

SINCE then no mixed government can be free, permanent and peaceable, but where the particular jurisdictions of its several constituent powers are clearly described, and the boundaries of each distinctly circumscribed; we may venture to pronounce, that the political freedom of Great Britain, did not arrive at any degree of perfection, till the BILL OF RIGHTS was admitted; and further limitations on the crown were made by the act of settlement, which placed the house of Hanover on the throne.

THE rights and privileges of the people thus ascertained and firmly secured, are contained in the following articles, which are copied from the celebrated BILL OF RIGHTS; and as they give a full idea of the political principles of the British constitution, they are entitled to a place in our general Elements of Politics.

1. THE pretended power of suspending laws, and the execution of laws, by regal authority, without consent of parliament, is illegal.

2. LEVYING of money for or to the use of the crown, by pretence of prerogative, without grant of parliament, for longer time, or in any other manner than the same is or shall be granted, is illegal.

3. IT is the right of the subjects to petition the king; and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning, is illegal.

4. THE raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against law.

5. SUBJECTS who are Protestants, may have arms for their defence, suitable to their condition, and as allowed by law.

6. ELECTIONS for members of parliament ought to be free.

7. FREEDOM of speech, and debates or proceedings in parliament, ought not to be impeached or questioned, in any court or place out of parliament.

8. EXCESSIVE bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel nor unusual punishments inflicted.

9. JURORS ought to be duly impanelled and returned; and jurors which pass upon men in trials of high treason, ought to be freeholders.

10. ALL grants and promises of fines and forfeitures of particular persons before conviction, are illegal and void.

11. AND for redress of all grievances, and for the amending, strengthening, and preserving of the laws, parliaments ought to be held frequently.

THERE are two other articles which are special, referring to particular usurpations of illegal power by JAMES II.

WE need not expatiate on these obvious privileges of British subjects, some of which have been noticed in former pages: it is in this place, however, that I beg leave to repeat my assertion, that the whole plan of civil and religious liberty in Britain, depends entirely on the sixth article; and that if this is violated, either by the crown, or by the people, the balance of our constitution is overturned, and a most effectual step taken to tear it up by the roots.

THAT the freedom of elections has been frequently violated since the Revolution, particularly in the latter part of the reign of Queen Ann, and since that time, by the ministerial power of the crown, is beyond a doubt; but give me leave to observe, that the basest, the worst kind of subversion of this right, most frequently happens on the part of the people, who bestow their votes on unworthy persons, either through selfish, or partial principles.

THIS is that foul treason against the constitution, which saps its foundation, while it firmly establishes the illegal encroachments of the ministerial power of the crown.

LET us then, in the next place, fairly state the several duties which British subjects owe to their king and country; in doing which, I hope to make it evident, that he, who wilfully transgresses his duty to his country, is more culpable than the very worst administration, of whose mismanagement he is the primary cause.

GOVERNMENT and sovereignty are established by mutual agreement betwixt the governor and the governed; and justice requires that the people should be faithful to their engagements. It is, therefore, the
first

first duty of all subjects in general to keep their word; and religiously to observe their contract with their sovereign, so long as he duly performs his obligations to the community.

ON this principle then, they are bound to maintain the dignity of his crown; to preserve a respect and veneration for his public and private character; to be faithful to him as their supreme head, and to venerate and esteem him as a man: in his public character we must even go one step further: if by the general tenour of his conduct he shews himself to be the father of his people, we certainly owe him filial affection and obedience: our duty to our king and country, when such a prince is on the throne, cannot be disunited; it is, in fact, one and the same thing; and every subject in the realm is bound in conscience, in honour, by the laws of nature, and by the institutes of civil society, bravely to sacrifice, if occasion requires it, his fortune, his private interests, and even his life, for the preservation of his sovereign; for under such circumstances he only discharges the duty he owes his country.

IT is the duty of the subjects of a good king, to support the legal prerogatives of the crown; for the glory of a prince and of a nation, when it is equitably governed, rise or fall together in the opinions of foreign powers. We must not, therefore, lightly or wantonly arraign his conduct, in the exercise of those most essential prerogatives, the rights of war and peace, of negotiations, treaties, alliances, and other concerns of a foreign nature. These must not be censured, much less publicly condemned, but upon the surest grounds; for it is very easy to wound a nation, and weaken its interests, through the sides of the prince; and for this reason, though the press ought to be as free as the air, I cannot but think him a traitor to his country, who, in the heat of party zeal, publishes articles of accusation against the sovereign and his ministers, on such important points, which he cannot maintain beyond a doubt by incontrovertible facts, by the clearest evidences, and by the soundest political deductions. From these premises, it appears that the pen of a party-writer in Great Britain, may prove a dagger to his country, in the hands of her foreign enemies; and I must own, I have always

considered accurate details of the mismanagement of the finances, or of the navy and army departments, when the publishers of them have been so minute as to enter into arithmetical evidence, in the most unfavourable right; having experienced the pernicious consequences of the circulation of such performances out of the kingdom, as were fit only for debates and proceedings in parliament.

It is incompatible with the duty of a good subject, to speak disrespectfully or indecently of his sovereign, or his family; or to ridicule his foibles, and the frailties to which he is liable in common with all other men; I should even imagine, that we are bound to silence upon these occasions, if, in his public capacity, he governs the nation with wisdom, equity and mercy. All sarcasms, illiberal satires, and indelicate reflections, aimed at private persons, are sharply reſented by individuals poſſeſſed of any degree of ſpirit. How grating then muſt ſuch behaviour be to a ſovereign, who is conſcious that he cannot, with propriety, condeſcend to ſhew any viſible tokens of diſpleaſure under theſe circumſtances! and how unworthy of the generoſity of Britons, to offer inſults on the preſumption of impunity!

THE felicity of our country, ſo ſtrongly depends on domeſtic tranquility, that it is the eſſential duty of a good ſubject not to endanger it, by a reſtleſs, diſcontented diſpoſition; ever ready to oppoſe the reigning powers of the ſtate, and to miſrepreſent the tranſactions of government. We owe the king, and his miniſters for the time being, as much reſpect, at leaſt, as is due to any other members of ſociety; and as men, and Chriſtians, we are bound to put the moſt favourable conſtructions on the ſentiments and actions of our fellow-creatures they will poſſibly bear; and therefore, we ſhould not want to change the adminiſtration from one ſet of men to another, any more than the form of government, but upon the ſoundeſt and moſt warrantable accounts; for the proſperity of the ſtate reſts upon the ſtability of both: it would therefore be a ſubverſion of all order, if either were made dependant on the caprice or inſtancy of the people.

IN all dubious caſes, in all political conteſts of a domeſtic kind, between the king or his miniſters, and the people, the preſumption ought

ought to be in favour of the crown, and the subjects ought to submit; because some state affairs are not of a nature to admit of the exposures and explanations to the public, necessary to adapt them to the capacities of the vulgar, so as to give them full satisfaction, as often as they may think fit to arraign the conduct of their rulers. It is even a question if, upon this principle, for the quiet of the state, we ought not to bear with a moderate abuse of the sovereign power: but this idea will not extend to any actual violation of the constitution, which includes the fundamental rights of the people. Here the people become their own judges; and every individual in Great Britain, of sound understanding, is capable of judging whether he is injured or not.

THESE are all the duties of subjects in a free state; consequently, of British subjects simply respecting their sovereigns; for obedience to the laws, and those obligations which should subsist between fellow-subjects, are all more properly included in the duties we owe our native country as a body politic, of which the sovereign himself is only the most distinguished member: we will, therefore, state these in the order of precedency which their respective importance claims.

THE first patriotic duty of British subjects, is carefully to provide against any abuse of the ministerial power of the crown, which has a manifest tendency to tyranny and oppression, or the subversion of the constitution; for though we may patiently suffer the caprices and occasional austerities of our governors, on the same principle that we submit to the ill-humour of our natural parents, yet when parents change to tyrants, their children have a right not only to resist them, but to deprive them of all authority.---Under the same circumstances, it is the duty of subjects to bring evil ministers and counsellors to a strict account, and to condign punishment, if they have deserved it; and even to depose kings, if no milder method can be taken to release them from slavery.

BUT the tyranny must be notorious and flagrant, as it was under the reign of CHARLES I, before we proceed to such extremities: yet it is not therefore to be said, that British subjects are obliged to wait till the prince has riveted their chains, and put it out of their power to

resist him; on the contrary, it is high time for them to think of providing for their safety, when all his actions have a general tendency to the subversion of the freedom of the constitution.

EVEN a people, who have submitted to an absolute government, have not thereby forfeited the right of asserting their liberty, and taking care of their preservation, when they find themselves reduced to abject slavery. Those who have the happiness then, to be born in a free country, and to live under a limited, mixed monarchy, undoubtedly have a much stronger claim to resist a prince; for they have a right to resume the sovereignty they have given him, on express conditions; and which he abdicates, the instant he invades the avowed rights and privileges of his subjects.

THE vigilant attention we ought to pay to the exercise of the ministerial power of the crown, and the necessity of resisting all notorious abuses of it, naturally lead me to a consideration of the legal means of redressing all grievances arising from bad ministers; and of preventing the revival of them in future.

THE second duty then of British subjects is, to choose proper representatives; and here permit me to introduce one general maxim, which will sufficiently point out the source of our national degeneracy, both in and out of parliament: “As the representatives of the society, “under a free-government, are in their assemblies to exercise the “power of the people, for the good of the people in general, and not “for their own private advantage; and, as men are apt to be blinded “and misled by their private advantage; nay, as there will always be “a great number of men in every society, who will, knowingly, and “with their eyes open, sacrifice the public to their private advantage; “therefore it is absolutely necessary, that in all questions that come “before such assemblies, no member should have any private advantage “or emolument, to get or lose, by his being for or against either side “of the question.”

Now let us suppose an æra in which the crown, or rather the ministers of the crown, shall be able, by the many places and pensions in their gift, to have a constant majority in the house, under the
absolute

absolute direction of the first lord of the treasury, or any other ostensible minister for the time being---a majority ever ready to render the joint powers of elocution and strong argument useless by superior numbers---no minister could desire a more effectual sacrifice of our excellent constitution, or a more secure one for himself, because he might erect the standard of despotism under the shadow of liberty; that is to say, under the form of a parliament. What would be the first question of any sensible foreigner, well acquainted with our right of representation, on seeing the nation thus reduced to the brink of destruction---what are the people about---what sort of representatives have they chosen---will this parliament last for many years---or will they soon have it in their power to choose proper representatives?---If so, they must have patience---the remedy is in their own hands.---But how would the same person be surprized, if he was told, that a people complaining of every species of ministerial usurpation, and encroachments on their sacred rights, had persisted, election after election, in disposing of their votes for heavy guineas, or light promises---for party purposes, or court favours---nay, for a mess of pottage---a feast, or a drunken carousal---and that even in the very height of their popular clamours and remonstrances against government---one of their representatives no sooner vacated his seat to sell himself to the minister, for a title, a place, or a pension, but they rechose him without loss of time, without opposition; though they knew that in future "he must have something " to lose by deciding any question in their favour, if it should be contrary to the measures of the minister*"---Would he not say, that such a people had no right to complain of bad administrations, since they themselves, by their venal, or partial conduct, had undermined the DEMOCRATICAL fortifications of the state, and opened the door for a combination of the two other powers, the MONARCHICAL and ARISTOCRATICAL; to check, controul, oppress, and finally ruin the third?---Once again then, let me enforce this essential duty of British

* THOSE who remember the removals of placemen, for not voting in favour of an Address of Thanks for the Peace of Versailles, 1763, will need no further proof, that placemen in parliament cannot well be free representatives of the people.

subjects---to choose proper representatives. The qualifications necessary to form a complete member of the British parliament, shall be stated in the clearest and most concise terms; and that they may strike every elector, as well as every candidate, for the honour of being chosen the representative of a free people, who may happen to peruse these pages, I shall close my Treatise on the Elements of Politics, with this subject. As to disqualified persons, the good sense of the people, if they would not suffer it to be biased, is sufficient to enable them to decide on all incapacities, whether legal or political; the greatest of all, however, I must remind my countrymen, ought never to escape their attention; "he who holds any considerable office during pleasure, cannot be deemed a proper person to represent any body of free people; for he must often be ungrateful to his benefactors, before he can be true to his constituents; and there is a much greater probability that he will be false to the latter, than hazard the loss of a lucrative employment, by ingratitude to the former."

THE THIRD indispensable duty which British subjects owe to their country, is a very mortifying piece of self-denial; yet he who has not the fortitude and integrity to submit to it, does not deserve to enjoy the inestimable privileges he derives from the happy circumstance of being born a member of the most distinguished civil society on earth.

EVERY honest subject of Great Britain, ought to be so far from aspiring to public employments, for which he is not qualified by natural genius, by education, or by principle, that it is his duty to refuse the offers that may be made him of occupying such stations, to the exclusion of men of integrity and superior abilities, whose talents might prove essentially serviceable to the state at all seasons; but more especially in times of public difficulty and danger. I cannot, therefore, conceive a fouler treason against the constitution of our country, than that of accepting unmerited places and pensions; and however unfashionable or unpracticable such a doctrine may appear, in an age of universal depravity, when selfish principles alone seem to be the guides of people of illustrious birth, who have had liberal educations; yet it is my business, in the investigation of true political tenets, to point out

out the best means of supporting the honour and dignity of civil government, though they may not be adapted to the contaminated ideas of degenerated Britons.

IT is equally disloyal, for it is not less injurious to our country, to hold more public employments in the state, than it is possible for any one man to fill with honour; because a faithful, diligent discharge of the duties of each, taken separately, requires the constant exertion of our best talents; and a sacrifice of the greatest part of our time. There is scarce a public office of any importance in this free government, but demands the utmost application, exactness and fidelity; in a word, to which a man of strict honour and integrity may not devote every hour of his life that can be spared from his private concerns, and the relaxations indispensably necessary to recruit his exhausted powers, and to invigorate him for fresh services.

WHAT shall we say then of those selfish mortals, who, either in church or state, seek after pluralities, but that they are guilty of the highest injustice to their sovereign, their country, and their fellow-subjects, by monopolizing employments for the sake of the emoluments belonging to them, which they are conscious would be more worthily filled, if they were separately distributed to different persons of approved capacities, adapted to each department? And were we to draw inferences from these general maxims, and apply them to particular offices of trust and importance under the British government, how mean, how despicable an idea must we consequently entertain of part of our fellow-subjects, sinking beneath the weight of *sine-cures*, and multiplied places!---But compassion requires that we should draw a veil over the cupidity of our fellow-mortals; and that we should expose no more of the deformity of human nature, than is necessary to serve the cause of public virtue: let the honest, uncorrupted subject, however, be his rank in life ever so humble, exult with becoming pride, while he can safely put his hand to his breast, and thank God that he is not one of these!

BUT it is the duty of a good subject not to use any unlawful means to attain any public office in the state, even though he is actually well qualified,

qualified for it, and though he should thereby preclude an insufficient person; because we are not permitted to introduce a general political evil into society, for the sake of any partial good that may result from this practice. I will suppose, for instance, that a most worthy respectable citizen offers himself a candidate for a public employment, in opposition to a bad man, and that the votes run in favour of the latter, so that there is no resource left to carry the election in favour of the first, but by buying off the remaining votes from the opposite party; in this case, I apprehend, that the introduction of bribery in any shape, either by promises of particular services, or by money, is so great a political evil in a free state, that it cannot be justified on any principle, not even on the pretext before us: for the administration of the bad man is only a partial evil, of more or less consequence to society, according to the nature of the office to which he is elected; and had the good citizen been chosen, the good resulting from his election could only have been partial, terminating at his death; whereas, the bad effects of the bribery and corruption, introduced and countenanced by such an authority, might last for ages. On this principle therefore, we must condemn all unlawful measures to acquire dignities, offices of trust and emolument, &c. though they are taken in favour of the best of men, as absolutely incompatible with the duty of a British subject.

THE next indispensable obligation of good subjects is, to obey cheerfully and readily, all legal summonses to attend the service of their country, as well on ordinary as extraordinary occasions; and when duly elected to troublesome but necessary offices in civil society, to execute them with resolution and integrity; not seeking to evade these charges by mean excuses, or base corruption, whereby unfit persons are often procured to act as deputies, to the great injury of our fellow citizens, and to the reproach of the administrators of our domestic police. A British subject does not act consistent with his duty to his king, his country, or his fellow-subjects, who, on frivolous pretexts, avoids the important offices of a juryman, or of a constable; and I may venture to add, that if any violence, injustice or error, is done to a
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good subject, in consequence of the ignorance or venality of the person acting in those offices in the room of another who should have served, the party evading the office is guilty of a high misdemeanour, and ought to be considered as a bad member of society.

It is the duty of good subjects to pay all taxes legally imposed; and never to defraud the public revenue, by buying, selling, or receiving into custody, contraband goods, or merchandize on which the established customs, or excises have not been paid. I am sorry to say, that British subjects too generally make light of this obligation: yet when we consider the practice of smuggling attentively, we cannot but own that it is a species of public robbery, which is unpardonable in Britain, where no tax can be imposed but by the consent of the representatives of the whole nation in parliament, and where the produce of these taxes is chiefly applied to the support of that form of government under which we chuse to live, and from which we require protection and aid for the preservation of our persons and property. To this we may add, that every deficiency in the public revenues, occasioned by this fraudulent practice, tends to the introduction of a new burthen on our fellow-subjects, to supply the exigencies of the state. But the discussion of this subject falls more properly under the head of finances, and is only introduced here, to shew that a good subject ought not to withhold from government its legal tribute.

THE last duty we shall notice as incumbent on every subject of the state is, not to quit the kingdom, but for the most cogent reasons; and never to the detriment of the community. On this principle, we ought not to desert our native country in times of public danger or calamity; especially if we profess any art or science, civil or military, the exercise of which may avert the one, or abate the other. Thus, when an enemy menaces an invasion, those who are able to bear arms in defence of their country, have no right to leave the kingdom: the same rule of conduct is to be observed with respect to the professors of the medical art, when pestilential disorders rage in the land; they have enjoyed the advantages arising from their practice in times of public welfare, and they are bound in honour and equity to face the danger, for the benefit of the community.

munity. The same may be said of all the useful arts and employments on which the immediate subsistence of the people depends; for which reason it has been customary, in seasons of public calamity, to enact temporary laws, to oblige butchers, bakers, brewers, &c. to remain in the respective cities to which they belonged, though at the peril of their lives. These cases excepted, it is generally allowed that subjects have a power of emigrating from a free country, without the permission of the sovereign: but it is at the same time required, that no good subject should abscond, to the detriment of the community to which he belongs. He therefore who absconds, to defraud his fellow citizens of their legal demands on him, or who carries away with him the tools and instruments of any useful art or manufacture peculiar to his native country, or who instructs foreigners in any branch of commerce, by means of which they may become competitors, or diminish the trade, must be deemed a traitor; and should never be readmitted to the enjoyment of the rights and privileges he acquired from the place of his nativity. In a British subject, the crime of settling in foreign countries, and establishing manufactures in them to rival their country, is a most heinous and unpardonable crime; and the more so, because Great-Britain has extensive and flourishing colonies ready with open arms to receive those whom private misfortunes exile from the mother-country. Emigrations in large bodies, even to these colonies, must be highly prejudicial to the community; but still this is a trifling evil, in comparison with the establishment of useful and profitable manufactures in the dominions of foreign potentates: but let it be remembered, that Britons, under this predicament, have forfeited all their natural and acquired rights, even those of succession and inheritance, our laws having justly proscribed them, unless, after notice given to them by our ambassadors, or other public ministers residing in the countries where they basely exercise their art, they return home within the space of six months.

THESE are the general duties of British subjects, which respect their sovereign and their country. There are likewise certain obligations which may be called special and local, as they arise out of the particular
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stations men hold under the government; and cease with their removal from those employments: such are the duties of the clergy, the magistracy, and the military; for which classes it is impossible to lay down any certain, invariable maxims of conduct: because, in these stations, much will depend upon time and circumstances; so that discretion and sound judgment must often supply the place of precept. We would therefore recommend to those who, in the early part of life, have a fair prospect of entering into any of these classes, the study of the best moral writers; of the statutes, and other law-books; and of the most approved military treatises, and historical memoirs.

WITH respect to the duties of subjects to each other, as individuals, and members of one political body, it is needless to enlarge upon them, for they are all included in the law of nature, to which we may safely refer free-born Britons; who will find, in the institutions of God and nature, and in the dictates of a virtuous mind, sufficient monitors to remind them, that they ought to live in peace and amity with their neighbours and countrymen; that in their manners they should be gentle, affable, and courteous to each other; that the tenour of their conduct should always be directed to prevent animosities, litigation and violence, to promote union and harmony, in their respective residencies; and finally, that they should not only abstain from injuring their fellow-subjects, and from envying or repining at the happiness of others, but should contribute, as much as in them lies, consistent with the duty they owe themselves and their country, to promote their welfare and felicity.

CONCLUSION.

SKETCH

OF THE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

REQUISITE TO FORM

A COMPLETE MEMBER OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

HAVING stated the general principles of the science of Politics, applied them to the British constitution, and demonstrated that it is preferable to every other system of government, it was my intention to have subjoined, by way of supplement, an analysis of the civil jurisprudence and municipal laws of England, by which the internal administration of the domestic concerns of this kingdom are regulated; but after long and unwearied application, I found it impossible to reduce the subject within any moderate bounds, so as to incorporate it with this work; for which reason I must reserve it for a separate treatise to be published at a future period, unless some gentleman of distinguished abilities in the law-department, should kindly take the hint, and render his country an essential service, by composing and presenting to the public, a complete Treatise on the POLICE of England; a work greatly wanted, and which, when properly executed, will be a valuable acquisition, meriting the patronage and attention of every gentleman in the kingdom.

It is sufficient for my present purpose, that I have pointed out those maxims of sound policy which have been allowed and approved of in
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all ages, and by which (the constitution of our country being always present in our minds) we may be enabled to form such an impartial opinion of the merits or demerits of the national measures of administration, and of every species of opposition to government, as will make us less liable, in future, to be the dupes of the artful insinuations of those who, availing themselves of men's ignorance of the first principles of civil society, bias their judgment, corrupt their integrity, and induce them to take a decisive part in public affairs, on false tenets.

WE have already observed, that the principal duty we owe to ourselves and to our country is, to preserve the just equipoise of our excellent constitution; and as we have no other method of discharging this obligation worthily, but by maintaining free elections of proper persons to represent us in parliament, I cannot close this Treatise on the Elements of Politics with greater propriety, than by giving a general idea of the qualifications requisite to form an able, independant member of the British senate*. “The foundation of every worthy character must be laid in early youth, by a rational education, suited to the sphere of life in which men are designed to act.”

If this maxim is admitted, it will follow of course, that the accomplished senator must be a man who has received the most virtuous, liberal, finished education, that human wisdom can communicate; and that British electors cannot take a surer method to determine the merits of candidates for the important trust of acting as their representatives in parliament, than to scrutinize strictly the early part of life of every man, who presumes to think himself worthy of such an exalted station.

* Though I apply the term Senate particularly to the British House of Commons, yet it is to be understood in a general sense, as defining any body or assembly of men in whom are vested authoritative, admonitory, judicial and legislative powers; and who consequently have a principal share in the government of a state.

The same accomplishments, therefore, will be requisite for a peer as for a commoner: but in Britain the merit will always be much greater in the noble youth who makes it the business of his early years to acquire them, because his seat in parliament being hereditary, not elective, his attachment to the studies which form a complete senator, are more disinterested; for however unqualified, he is intitled, by succession, to his senatorial dignity.

As a guide to my countrymen in their choice of representatives at some future period, when, happily, Heaven may inspire them with the virtuous resolution to restore the pristine vigour of the British constitution, by electing only such as are properly qualified; and as an exemplary pattern for every youth who aspires to public employments in this free state; I shall now delineate those additional branches of education which will be found as essentially necessary for the senator or statesman, as the knowledge of the theory of Commerce, Politics and Finances; the particular subjects of this work.

It is the opinion of Plato, that the Deity, in the formation of mankind, does not temper them all alike, but composes them of very different ingredients; and by a beautiful allegory, in which he compares the several degrees of human excellence to gold, silver, and brass or iron, he draws the outlines of those qualifications which are adapted to the three general classes, into which the inhabitants of a nation are usually divided. It is also a tenet of the antient schools, that three things are requisite to form a perfect man; or, in other words, to make him as complete a resemblance, as possible, of his great Creator: nature, manners and reason.

We need not enter into a fruitless controversy, concerning the perfection or depravity of human nature; it matters not, whether we derive a corrupt, maimed, imperfect understanding from our parents, in consequence of original sin, giving us a natural bias to evil; or whether a rational soul is originally given with our bodies, to discriminate us from the brutes, and to enable us to form just ideas of every object that occurs to us; since we may draw an inference from the opinions of the antients, liable to no objection whatever from the systems of modern religion and philosophy.

“It is evident, that men who are destined to command, to counsel, or to give laws to whole communities, should either be composed by nature of finer spirits * than the bulk of mankind; or should stand indebted for them to manners and education;” at all events, they must be endowed with, or acquire pre-eminent talents, distinguishing them from their fellow-mortals.

* See Shakespear's Measure for Measure.

IF, therefore, an early propensity to indolence and inactivity, an aversion to learning, slowness of apprehension, or other marks of a slender capacity appear in youth, it is the duty of parents and guardians to qualify them only for the ordinary concerns of private life, since the faculties which lead to the chief good and happiness of mankind are deficient or imperfect in such characters; and it would be an act of injustice to our country, to attempt to place them in public stations, where superior abilities are required, to support the honour and happiness of a whole nation. But if, notwithstanding the disadvantages of want of genius and education, men of weak understandings, availing themselves of family-interest, or court-favour, will offer themselves as candidates for offices which are elective; if there is any sense of honour, any regard for the welfare of their country left in the breasts of the electors, it must surely be their inclination, as it is their duty, to convince such men of the folly of their conduct, by rejecting them with disdain.

NEXT to a happy genius, an early attachment to sound manners, in defiance of all the allurements of fashionable dissipation, should be expected from those who aspire to public employments in a free state; especially of a legislative, or judicial kind. They should be perfect masters of that part of philosophy which teaches us to command our passions, and lays down the rules and precepts of social virtue; by which we are enabled to pursue with fortitude, temperance and perseverance, the natural principles of honour, probity, justice and humanity; to exhibit continual proofs of a perfect knowledge of the moral obligations we owe to society, by a regular course of good behaviour; and to shew ourselves worthy of the honours we expect from our fellow-citizens, by distinguished sobriety and delicacy of conduct; "For the art of counseling, directing or governing others with wisdom and discretion, depends on that of living well ourselves:" how then can we expect, that the man who has passed the best part of his time in brothels, at gaming assemblies, at horse-races, or in the round of effeminate amusements, which hourly seduce the inhabitants of great cities, should be able to give his advice on any important subject, respecting

respecting the internal or external administration of public affairs? Will that man, who has made it his boast and his constant practice to despise the sacred rites of religion, to violate the strictest bonds of amity, to elude the payment of his just debts, and to set order and decorum at defiance in his nocturnal revels, be a proper person to enact laws for the distribution of justice, for the security of property, for the preservation of public tranquility, or for enforcing obedience to the civil magistrate and his substitutes; or would it not be a burlesque on sound policy, to consult such men, on the expediency of war or peace, who really know not when a war is just and equitable, a peace honourable or dishonourable, an alliance dangerous or salutary! Yet, if we look into the British House of Commons, at any late æra, since venality has blinded the eyes of the electors, it is to be feared, we shall find no inconsiderable number of representatives, who fall under one or other of the above-mentioned predicaments! In a word, it is the senator's duty thoroughly to understand all the obligations to honesty in their full force and utmost extent; and not only to know, but to practice, all the moral and social virtues: for these attainments he must stand indebted to the most celebrated writers on moral philosophy, policy, and public œconomy; and let it be remembered, that in such bodies of electors as usually assemble to nominate candidates at a general election, there are never wanting persons of learning and experience, capable of judging whether the parties proposed have pursued such studies as are requisite to form the character of an accomplished senator. The freedom of this country, therefore, can never be endangered, if the electors will resolve to reject all gamesters, debauchees, prodigals and idiots; and to choose only such persons as are properly, as well as legally qualified, to assert and maintain the rights and privileges of their constituents.

It is also highly expedient, that a British member of parliament should be perfectly master of ancient and modern history, but more particularly the latter, in which must be included the most accurate knowledge of every part of the history of his own country.

From the records of antiquity, he will learn true fortitude, fidelity, justice,

justice, temperance, œconomy, and a spirit of heroic ardour inciting him to sacrifice every private consideration; health, ease, fortune, and even life itself, for the good of his country, when she is so critically situated that her preservation from ruin depends entirely on such signal exertions of patriotism. Modern history will make him acquainted with the commercial and political interests of those nations, whose superiority or rivalry are to be guarded against, or whose friendship and alliance is to be cultivated by his own country; and it should be a fixed rule with electors to observe if the candidates for their votes are conversant in the history of the revolutions of their own country; for he who is not animated by the glorious struggles that have been made in defence of public freedom, and the signal successes that have attended them, will either be supinely indolent and inattentive, when ministerial power encroaches on the rights of the people, or he will countenance the usurpation, if not from venality, yet either from want of public spirit, or ignorance of the danger to which the constitution is exposed.

THE manners and customs of his countrymen, their natural genius, temper, general behaviour, and mode of thinking and reasoning on public affairs, should be thoroughly investigated by every man, who presumes to solicit the honour of representing his fellow-citizens in parliament; and no greater proof can be given of the incapacity, or of the sinister views of a candidate, than a manifest contempt of the manners, opinions, and bold, free behaviour of the mass of the people; for a familiar acquaintance with these, enables the accomplished senator to allay their prejudices and animosities, to silence their clamours, to remove their discontents, to settle their differences, to quell tumults, to disperse rioters, and sometimes to prevent the most dangerous insurrections, by his affable, courteous behaviour, his friendly interposition, and his prudent advice: these are the advantages society will derive (out of doors) from his knowledge of the dispositions of the people, and how they stand affected as to the immediate posture of public affairs; and, in the senate, he will always propose lenient, pacific measures for correcting and reforming popular abuses; while, on the

contrary, he who heartily despises the vulgar herd of constituents, and what he may be pleased to call "the scum of the earth," will be violent both in the senate and in public, and will be ready to aid any desperate minister, who shall take it in his head, that there is "a political necessity," to make the people submit by fire and sword, or by rigid, partial prosecutions, to his arbitrary will and pleasure.

ALL the reasons and ends of government, every occurrence in the administration of public affairs, the proceedings of all courts of judicature, and all public assemblies, the characters of all persons who enjoy posts of honour and confidence in the state, and the desires and expectations of those who haunt the drawing-room, and the levees of ministers, are subjects of profound meditation; and of critical enquiry; and will contribute greatly to the accomplishment of a complete senator; "for the knowledge of men is a principal branch of true wisdom."

It is then the duty of British electors, to cast a retrospective eye on the way of living to which their candidates have been accustomed; it will be easily traced how they have passed their time, and whether they have employed it generally, in such a manner as was likely to furnish them with a competent knowledge of government, and of the state of that civil society, whose honour and interest they are to support in parliament.

THE last, and one of the most important points I shall have occasion to mention, respecting the education of youth designed for any public employment, is, the art of speaking in public; which in no country in Europe is so essentially requisite as in Britain, nor in none so neglected.

"ELOQUENCE is the ornament of wisdom, and the imperial diadem of science:" to what purpose will all the attainments already mentioned serve, in a public capacity, if the gift of speech is wanting; especially in a country where it is almost impossible to mix in society, without finding some occasion to deliver our sentiments, on subjects of art, commerce, or policy? In all our public assemblies we meet with speakers; they cannot well proceed without them: but how mortifying it is to observe men of distinguished talents, versed in all the
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other arts and sciences which entertain or instruct mankind, so deficient in this, that we are put to the torture in hearing them, though we are convinced they are the best judges of the matter before them! But, in the British parliament, this qualification is indispensably necessary; for the senator, who to a lively invention, a due arrangement of his subject, an happy choice of words, and a graceful attitude, is enabled to add a manly, harmonious voice, will render all his other accomplishments still more conspicuous; and support the cause of the commonwealth, by the dignity of a complete character. The examples of the power of eloquence in ancient times, are almost incredible; and in our days, we have seen its astonishing effects in a British House of Commons. I should be taxed with partiality, if I were to specify the few speakers, who, in the present parliament, do honour to themselves and their constituents, by the strength of their reasoning, the graces of their elocution, and the dignity of their action; but having attended the courts of law, and other public assemblies, occasionally, for twenty years past, solely from an early attachment to the science of eloquence, of which I now presume to think myself a competent judge, I cannot neglect this opportunity of paying a feeble tribute of gratitude to the only man whom I could ever consider as the Cicero of this age and country; and to whom I stand indebted for the most sublime, rational entertainments, I have enjoyed through life. Those who remember LORD MANSFIELD in the prime of life, must do him the justice to own, that in him were united all the natural and acquired accomplishments which, in the opinions of the best ancient and modern writers, constitute the finished orator; and so highly was he admired when at the bar, that the most favourite public amusements were deserted by young gentlemen of taste and judgment, whenever it was known that he was to plead, particularly before the Chancellor at Lincoln's-Inn Hall, where the sittings often last during the evening; and I believe few, if any, instances can be given since, of such crowded audiences, and such a general close attention, not only of gentlemen of the law, but of strangers, who were drawn thither by the charms of genuine eloquence.

It has been asserted by some writers of great reputation, "That the liberty of the people may, in a great measure, be determined by the state of arts and sciences, in any country." If these are patronized and carried to a great degree of perfection by the rulers of a nation, it is said to be a proof that they are friends to the political freedom of mankind; and the very contrary is said to be the case, where the cultivation of them is either totally despised, or manifestly neglected. To this opinion I cannot absolutely subscribe; because, I apprehend that we have, before our eyes, a striking evidence of the futility of the argument: for all the polite arts and sciences, except one, are cultivated, patronized and supported too lavishly, with a degree of vanity and idle ostentation, which must, in the end, prove highly prejudicial to our commercial interests; but the art of eloquence, one of the noblest of all human sciences, is shamefully neglected by the nation in general, and is openly discountenanced and warmly opposed, by the court-interest in particular: it is likewise very remarkable, that in proportion as the arts which are nourished and supported by effeminate luxury, have been favoured in this reign, eloquence, which promotes public virtue and sound manners, has been decried; and as it has declined, so have we deviated more and more from the principles of political liberty, which are the pillars of our excellent constitution.

LET me then earnestly intreat my countrymen, not to elect mute representatives. Can any thing be more absurd than the practice of tying the tongues of two or three hundred sensible freeholders in a city or county, every one of whom could deliver his sentiments with fortitude, ease and accuracy, (if not with dignity and elegance) on national concerns, by choosing a dumb man to represent them in parliament. Every candidate who is unable to address his countrymen in a manly, nervous, eloquent stile, should be set aside as an unqualified person; and the art of speaking well in public, should be made one of the most essential requisites for attaining the distinguished honour of being the deputy of a free people.

If this reformation takes place, the science of true eloquence, which supposes that the powers of oratory will only be employed on
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the side of virtue, will be attentively studied; and our future parliaments will be composed of men not only willing, but able, to stop the progress of ministerial encroachments on public freedom. At present, it is demonstrable that, if the people had more speaking members, the shameful practice of cutting short the debates in opposition to the ministry, by calling for the question, would be impeded, if not effectually prevented; and, vague as the idea may appear, I see no reason why a minister may not be harangued out of his motion, as well as a jurymen be starved out of his opinion: at all events, the independent electors of Great Britain will be highly blameable, if they do not make the experiment. I will go one step further, and venture to affirm, that if the spirit of true patriotism, instead of its shadow, the spirit of party, prevailed universally in this country, they would find it more for their interest, in the alternative, to give the legal qualification to a very poor, honest gentleman, possessed of that essential accomplishment, true eloquence, and to elect him as their representative, than to choose the principal man in the county, qualified in every other respect, but totally deficient in this.

BUT, in cases where there is no such alternative, after having ascertained, by a strict scrutiny, the several qualifications already pointed out, and included in a perfect education; it should be an invariable rule with electors, to prefer men of generous birth, paying particular attention to their family connections; for we very often receive impressions from education, favourable to virtue and public freedom, which are afterwards eradicated by the private influence and example of our relations. The history of every nation affords illustrations of this truth; but in none are they more frequent, than in the annals of Britain.

AN independent situation with respect to fortune, and a known contempt of riches, easily discernible by a liberal, beneficent character, may be considered as the final accomplishment of a British senator.

HAPPY the people who have the fortitude, discernment and virtue, to elect such characters, and such alone, to enact the laws by which they

they are to be governed, to protect their property, to preserve and improve their commerce, to raise the public revenues with discretion, and to note the application of them with a jealous eye!

PERMIT me now to take my leave of this subject, with a few political apothegms, suited to the times.

If ministerial influence in parliament should prevail so far, as constantly to assure a majority in the House of Commons, in favour of every measure indiscriminately, which the reigning administration thinks proper to adopt and persist in, then farewell to the renown of this mighty empire! for glory dwells not with slaves, but encreases or diminishes with the liberty of the people.

A FREE nation may survive temporary thralldom; it may have a saviour: but a people enslaved by their own venal or dastardly conduct, can only change from one oppressor to another. The natural abode of VIRTUE is by the side of LIBERTY; but when liberty degenerates to licentiousness, VICE takes her place, and a general dissolution of all order and decorum ensues.

REMEMBER, therefore, my friends, countrymen and fellow-citizens, that all extremes are dangerous; you were born free; preserve the integrity of your virtuous ancestors, and you will remain so.---But if you wilfully adopt the vicious dispositions, manners and customs of slaves, absorbing every idea of public good, in the fashionable dissipations of a round of empty pleasures, your national character will be lost, and the distinction between you, and the subjects of neighbouring despotic states, will scarce be visible! VICE and folly forge the chains of a degenerate nation; bad ministers only put them on: arouse then to a sense of public virtue, and you will soon find, that the freedom and happiness of your country depends solely on a vigorous exertion of honest principles in the commons of the realm.

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PART I.

IT has been a constant subject of observation, complaint and reproach, that the inhabitants of Great Britain in general, not excepting even the lowest classes of the people, are too strongly addicted to politics; which several eminent writers have considered as a national vice in the people, deeming that science to be totally foreign to their sphere of life.

It is not indeed to be wondered at, that the subjects of absolute monarchy should turn this national taste into ridicule, and describe this country as a state where men, women and children, discourse of public affairs, with as much freedom as they do of their domestic concerns. But it is astonishing and unpardonable, that English authors of repute, especially since the Revolution, should attempt to laugh us out of this disposition, or affect to be surprized at it; and still more inexcusable is it, in any minister of state, or any administration, to express anger, and shew resentment, on this account; provided political writers and speakers keep to general subjects, and avoid personal invective, scurrility and abuse.

THE frequent expensive wars, and heavy continental connections, resulting from the political situation of Great Britain, have introduced a system of Finances altogether unknown in this country before the Revolution. I mean that of funding or borrowing of money on the plan of repaying it, by converting the principal into annuities redeemable by parliament, and bearing different annual rates of interest. These annuities being transferable, this mode of levying the immense sums required for the exigencies of the state, has hitherto succeeded to admiration, and has even answered all the purposes of refunding the principal, within any given term---for an open market has been established, where the principal sum originally lent by the subscribers to government, may be recovered (perhaps with profit) by sale to others, who are willing to become purchasers: and it sometimes happens that a loss is sustained, and the whole principal sum cannot be thus recovered by sale or transfer, owing to the temporary circumstances of the nation. It is this market for the funds, it is this fluctuation of profit and loss, which propagates that avidity for Politics, often so discernable in the countenances of my countrymen, that their very aspect bespeaks them to be---

“ Big with the fate of CATO and of ROME!”

EXTENT of dominion, expensive operations of war, and various chargeable contingencies, having augmented upon the nation of late years, the funding system has grown up with them, to a state of amazing maturity, and is now naturalized in this kingdom. It has been pregnant with some public debt, in every year of war; and the several rates of annual interest accorded for the principal sums borrowed of the public, form together such a capital sum to be paid half yearly to the lenders or stockholders, as the ordinary revenues of the state, after defraying the expences of the civil government, have never been able to supply: therefore, new imposts and taxes of various kinds, under the denomination of CUSTOMS and EXCISES, have been laid on sundry merchandise imported into this kingdom; and on divers articles of home consumption, particularly on the necessaries of life; which bearing hard upon the ARTISAN, the MANUFACTURER, the TRADESMAN,

MAN, and the MERCHANT, it is no wonder that each, in their several stations, should be solicitous about the administration of public affairs.

WAR will increase these taxes, to pay the interest of new loans on the same system of Finances.

MAL-ADMINISTRATION of the public revenues, will prevent the diminution of them in time of peace.

HERE then, we discover strong motives for the inquisitive turn of the mass of the people.---This sends them to coffee-houses, and other places of public resort, to read news-papers, to talk over the state of national affairs, and to applaud or condemn, according to their various capacities or interests, the conduct of administrations. What then shall we say to that part of the people, who have acquired any considerable property, and have vested, perhaps their all, in loans, called the PUBLIC FUNDS?

IN times of peace, every rumour of war agitates and disturbs them, as the consequence of a rupture must be additional loans, proportionable to the exigencies of the state; and the creation of new funds, must necessarily lessen the value of the old. In times of war, the alarm is still greater: the invasion of a foreign power may reduce the funds to one half of their original value; for the universal panic, under such a circumstance, would induce such numbers of proprietors to sell out, in order to transport their property to some other country, that the paucity of purchasers might lower the price fifty *per cent*: great national losses by sea or land, involving the nation in fresh extraordinary expences; tumults and insurrections at home; and, in short, a variety of other accidents, terrify the minds of those whose whole, or chief support depends on the funds, in times of public danger.

ALLOWING then for that unhappy situation of the human mind, when it is fluctuating between hope and fear, let us not too hastily blame the majority of the people, thus deeply interested in the loans and taxes, if they sometimes vent a little ill-humour, whenever they think the affairs of the nation in general, or the revenue department in particular, is weakly or wickedly administered. Should they avail themselves of the liberty of the press, and proceed even to unbecoming

lengths, in expressing their dissatisfaction, this must not always be ascribed to party and faction: it is oftener the voice of interest; the anxiety for real property, that fomented popular clamour; and when the murmurs of the public are viewed in this light, a wise and temperate minister will be led to consider them as the effect of a cause which he cannot remove, and will submit to this political evil, with a good grace. He will go one step further: as far as is consistent with the dignity of the crown, and the security of government, which often depends on secrecy, he will exert himself to convince the public, that the national interest is firmly supported at home and abroad; he will authoritatively and expeditiously contradict every false intelligence, that is likely to instill causeless fears into the minds of the proprietors of the public funds: or, if any real, unhappy change of affairs is to be apprehended, he will make the earliest, most clear, and public notification of it to the whole nation; that advantages may not be taken, by ill-designing men, through private intelligence, to defraud credulous people of their property, by augmenting their fears, in order to purchase their stock at a low price.

I MUST intreat my readers to consider these remarks as a cursory introduction, necessary for the better comprehending the more intricate parts of our subject, and as the only sure means to enable us to judge of the advantages or disadvantages of the funding system, which is the basis of all our revenue transactions, and which, in all probability, may last for ages. I shall now trace the origin, to remote times, of all aids, grants, subsidies and taxes, contributed or paid, whether voluntarily or by compulsion, to the sovereigns or rulers of nations, for the public service.

THIS will naturally oblige me to introduce a concise history of the various modes of raising public revenues, in different ages and countries, for the maintenance and support of the administration of civil government, as well as to provide for the extraordinary exigencies of war; and from this historical review will be deduced some of the elementary principles of our modern finance systems, particularly the rise of PUBLIC CREDIT, the object of the second part of this treatise.

It

It appears, from the few authorities I have been able to find on the subject*, that aids, contributions, and public revenues, for the support of government, are as ancient as the first institutes of civil society; in fact, they were the obvious consequences of the change mankind underwent, by quitting the state of nature for that of human policy. As it was found necessary to vest a supreme authority to govern, in one or more persons, for the benefit of a community, so was it equally requisite to entrust a public treasure in the hands of the rulers of nations, as a collateral means of securing obedience to legal authority at home; and of providing a proper force to repel all hostile attempts from foreign enemies. But the methods of accumulating public treasures, of furnishing revenues for the support of the dignity of the supreme rulers, or for the extraordinary exigencies of the state, were as various as the manners and customs of different nations, and as remote from the systems of finances invented in modern times; notwithstanding which, the little that is extant on this subject, should be preserved in a Treatise on the General Elements of Finances; for, if we cannot collect any valuable hints from the early ages of the world on this head, we shall, at least, gratify a laudable curiosity, and be well entertained.

THE justly celebrated DAVID HUME informs us, that, "It appears to have been the common practice of antiquity to make provision, in times of peace, for the necessities of war; and to hoard up treasures beforehand, as the instruments either of conquest or defence, without trusting to extraordinary imposts, much less to borrowing, in times of trouble and confusion†."

IN order, therefore, to conceive a right idea of the system of Finances

* It is very remarkable, that almost all the writers of repute, on the origin of civil society, are quite silent on this important subject; indeed, it seems to have been totally overlooked till of late years, when the amazing resources of modern nations, having neither mines of the precious metals, nor yet amassed treasures, opened the eyes of speculative men, and engaged them in attempts to trace the sources of those new powers which modern states have acquired, and by which they have been enabled to accomplish enterprizes in war and commerce, surpassing all the boasted exploits of antiquity.

† Essay on Public Credit: London, printed for A. Millar, 1752.

in ancient governments, it is necessary to bear in mind, that princes and the rulers of republics, had always a domain or real estate proportioned to their condition and extent of territory; and that their first finance principle was: to consider imposts, or subsidies levied on the subjects, only as an extra-supply, granted through necessity: a momentary aid, to which public danger gave birth; and which expired on the restoration of public tranquility*. But it sometimes happened, that the frugality of the prince, or of the chiefs of republics, had enabled them to amass treasures sufficient to defray the expences of a war; and in this case, no tax was imposed on the people: for princes, and other chief magistrates, in ancient times, would have thought it dishonourable to have kept their treasures locked up, and withheld from the public service.

WHEN the reverse happened, and a prodigal, needy king was on the throne; or men of the same complexion were at the head of a republic, then, temporary subsidies were granted, either in specie, or in kind. But the very instant that an enemy was conquered, or that effects were taken in war, sufficient to defray the charges of carrying it on, all further aid from the subjects was deemed unreasonable, and was rarely granted.

INDEED, the ancients always made their conquests support their public expences, or they fell in the attempt, and became themselves tributary to their victors. Their wars were decisive; and therefore, their imposts were temporary, and not permanent, like those of modern states.

A FERTILE country and industrious inhabitants, together with a mild and equitable government, were the sources of the power and felicity of the Egyptians for a long succession of ages. The kings of Egypt enjoyed a rich domain; this they improved by œconomy and by commerce, which they carried on in their own names: from thence they derived the most advantageous and legal succours, on public emergencies; and the same hand that grasped the sword of triumphant

* *Memoires pour servir à l'Histoire Generale des Finances, par M. le Chevalier D'Eon.*
A Londres chez J. Dixwell, 1764.

conquest, disdained not to sign the dispatches of the royal factors, who were sent to carry on traffic, on the sovereign's account, with foreign nations.

WHAT a reproach to the contemptible race of modern nobility, who, in some countries, consider commerce as a degradation of nobility, and will starve, through false pride, rather than be enriched by embracing it!

MINES of gold and silver always were esteemed the separate property of the sovereign; and these, according to DIODORUS SICULUS, produced annually in Egypt, a revenue of two millions of our money. The tributes imposed on conquered nations, entered also into the royal coffers: the spoils of war appertained likewise to the king; but he generally distributed a part to the priests, the warriors and other subjects. --- With these treasures in hand, the people were exempt from all imposts.

THE public magistrates and officers of state had also domains assigned them, consisting of a certain share of lands, with slaves to cultivate them; these were fixed and invariable, so that they devoted themselves, without venality, to the public welfare. Their immense public works were all carried on at the expence of the royal treasury; and what that treasury must have been, the monuments of the foolish ostentation of their princes, may lead us to conceive, when we are told, that it cost no less than £187,583 sterling in vegetables, for the consumption of the workmen, who built the grand pyramid*.

THE Persians are the next nation of repute, concerning whose finances we have any certain information on record. Their subsidies were chiefly paid to their princes in the products of nature; such as grain, provisions, forage, horses, camels, &c. These were exchanged or sold in traffic, from which the royal treasury was replenished. Strabo relates, that the Satrap of Armenia sent regularly, every year, to the king of Persia, 20,000 colts.

DARIUS, the son of Hystaspes, was the first Persian monarch, who demanded from the respective provinces of his kingdom, a regular

* Memoires de D'Eon, p. 71

contribution in specie, by way of assessment on the revenues of each. He sent for the deputies, and interrogated them, if certain sums, which he proposed to them, would be too much for their respective districts; and he reduced his first demand one half, to shew his moderation: but so odious was the very idea of taxation, that the Persians, who had given to CYRUS the title of Father, and to CAMBYSES that of Master, stiled DARIUS the Trader.

THE republics of Greece were subject to different taxes: those of ATHENS were the most remarkable; and all the other governments nearly resembled them, except the Lacedemonians, whose negligence in this essential point of the care of the public revenues, brought on their ruin.

SOLON, the great Athenian legislator, held it as a maxim of policy, "That wise regulations, with respect to the public finances, ought to be one of the first objects of legislation."---He therefore divided the people into three classes.

THE FIRST, was composed of such, who estimated their effects at five hundred measures in grain and liquids---for in this manner they computed the wealth of their citizens.

THE SECOND, of those who were worth to the amount of three hundred measures.

THE THIRD, of those who had but two hundred.

FROM these three classes, they elected their magistrates.---All the inferior citizens were comprised under the classes of mercenaries and of artificers: in other words, of persons labouring with their hands for a livelihood, and servants.

THE citizens of the three classes paid annually, into the public treasury, the following sums.

THOSE of the first class contributed an attick talent of silver---about 55*l.* of our money.

THE SECOND, half a talent---or 25*l.*

THE THIRD, ten minæ: the sixth part of a talent---or 9*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*

As the contributions to the public treasury, were made the standard for regulating the order of the classes, a citizen, by increasing his
subsidy

subsidy to the state, might raise himself from one class to another, at his option.

STRANGERS, that is to say, aliens or foreigners, likewise paid a yearly contribution to the state; but it was trifling, only twelve drachmæ---or 7*s.* sterling: indeed, on failure of payment, the law was rigid, "They were reduced to servitude, and exposed to sale."

THE other revenues of the Athenian commonwealth, were a species of land tax, but it was paid in the products of the cultivated ground: duties on the importation and exportation of merchandize; the sale of forest wood; the working of silver mines; and lastly, the fines imposed by the judges on convicts, for various trespasses or crimes.

I HAVE been very particular in stating the Finances of Athens, for two reasons:

FIRST, On account of the high reputation of SOLON; who, even by modern writers, is stiled, "The prince of legislators."

SECONDLY, Because I discover in his system, a finance principle, which ought to be invariably adhered to in every civilized government.

IN all public subsidies, aids, taxes, talliages or imposts, laid on the subjects of a country, due regard ought to be paid to their estates, or real possessions; and government should even avail itself of the foibles of mankind, by taxing men according to their supposed property, deduced from the ostensible marks of wealth, exhibited in splendid equipages, costly furniture, rich apparel, and sumptuous tables; and they likewise should throw out the lure to ambition, by apportioning rank and titles, to the contributions paid into the public treasury.

AT all events, property should be followed, wherever it is to be found, and a proportionable subsidy be required from the owner. This is very little attended to in England, where the common people, not eligible to magistracy, (those who at Athens paid nothing) bear the burthen of our public expences; and pay not only for the extra-expences, but for the protection and support of civil government, in a manner that bears no proportion to the benefits they receive from that government, in comparison to their opulent neighbours.

THE history of the Lacedemonian republic, improvident as it was, furnishes an anecdote of a very singular nature, relative to our subject; which conveys a hint of great utility to modern financiers.

THE Samians demanding a subsidy of the Lacedemonians, for having conquered their enemies, they fell upon an extraordinary expedient, having no public treasure.---The government enjoined all the subjects of the state to keep a strict fast for one day, extending the decree to their very cattle; and it was ordered, that the value of the consumption of that day, in case they had not fasted, should be paid to the Samians*. Absurd as this scheme must appear to modern statesmen, it is certain that, in times of public danger, and upon extraordinary emergencies, expedients as singular must be put in practice: such as are the least onerous, assuredly demand the preference; and in a nation famed for extravagant, daily expenditures, surely a similar plan might be deemed both prudent and productive.

THE celebrated Roman republic owed its prosperity to the wise administration of its revenues; and its fall to the corruption, venality and dissipation of the managers of that department.

WHILE her generals, and chief magistrates, reckoned it a principal part of their public character, to bring in immense treasures to the state, and to deposit them in the temple of Saturn, as a sacred pledge for the public use, in times of pressing danger, ROME flourished; every new victory added to the national revenue; conquered nations were made tributary†; the honour of an alliance with the Roman state was paid for, by annual or fixed subsidies; and the triumphs of their consuls, ambassadors and victors, were more or less honourable, in proportion to the riches they brought into the treasury. The applause of their country---the honours which virtue delights in---made ambition laudable; for it was disinterested.

THE reply of Fabricius, the Roman ambassador, to Pyrrhus, King

* Aristotle de Œconom. tom. II.

† The Romans held a political, proverbial saying, to which the republic constantly adhered, while it was in a flourishing state. *Bellum seipsum alet.* See Tit. Liv. lib. 33; and Plutarch's Lives.

of Epirus, when that monarch wanted to bribe him, is a fine monitor to modern ministers, and a severe satire on their conduct.

As it strongly marks the character of those times when Rome was at the height of human glory, permit me to recite it.---To convince Pyrrhus, that wealth had no charms for him, at least, at the expence of his country, he thus addressed the King: "Employed for a long
" time past in the administration of the affairs of the republic, I have
" had a thousand opportunities of amassing considerable sums of
" money, without the least reproach. Could a more favourable
" occasion present itself, than that which happened four years since?
" Invested with the consular dignity, I was sent against the Samnites,
" the Lucanians, and the Brucians, at the head of a numerous army;
" I ravaged a great extent of country; I gained several decisive battles;
" I took many opulent cities by assault; I enriched the whole army
" with their spoils; I refunded to every citizen what he had contributed
" towards the expences of the war; and having received the honours
" of a triumph, I still put four hundred talents into the public trea-
" sury."---These illustrious examples were by no means rare in ancient Rome. All their great generals were animated with the same noble sentiments, till some years after the last Punic war, when her venal citizens began to appropriate to themselves, the spoils of conquered nations, and in the same moment to forge chains for their own country*: so closely united are venality and despotism.

I WILL not trouble you with a detail of the various imposts introduced in the decline of the republic, and during the civil wars of Cæsar and Pompey, when the revenues they drew from their colonies, and tributary provinces, were considerably diminished. It is sufficient to observe, that they were quite exhausted, while Augustus, Cæsar

* Of this number were Marius, Sylla, Pompey, Cæsar and Lucullus, who, compared with those brave and honest generals, Cornelius Lentulus, Quintus Minutius, Portius Cato, Scipio Africanus, Lucius Scipio, and Paulus Emilius, appear to be no other than public robbers. The sums that Paulus Emilius transported to Rome, and deposited in the public treasury, after the conquest of Persia, were so considerable, that no tax of any kind whatever was imposed on the Roman people for many years after this event.

Diod. Sicul. lib. 28.

and Anthony, disputed the empire of the world; and that, in proportion as the empire increased and established itself on the ruins of the republic, the œconomy of government diminished, its expences accumulated, and taxation made such a rapid progress, that it soon became quite insupportable.

FROM this period taxes became arbitrary, depending entirely on the dispositions of the emperors. Some of them, however, supported their governments, as in the time of the republic, on the spoils and tributes of conquered countries; so that, under good reigns, this annual supply swelled the public treasure, until prodigal emperors squandered it away, and took to rapine and extortion, to fill up the void.

THESE not only had recourse to taxes known in the world before their time, but they invented others, the very name of which were enough to excite hatred, despair and revolt.

ONE laid a tax on smoke; another on the air; another on the shadow of trees; another on sepulchral rites; another on every tile of an house; and, to complete the list, Vespasian levied a tax on urine, because it was used for putrifying a plant called Orseille, of which a red paste was made, esteemed excellent in dying, before the discovery of cochineal.

THE ingenious author of *Considerations on the Commerce, Policy and Circumstances of Great Britain*, relates an anecdote of very modern date, concerning a tax, equally ridiculous and grievous, which was humorously opposed, though not without insult, but to a happy effect.

“ THE want of common sewers in Lisbon, before its destruction by
 “ the earthquake, made the carrying of human ordure out of houses,
 “ a beneficial employment for black women; many of whom, being
 “ slaves, maintained poor widows, with families of orphans, by such
 “ work. But a tax being laid, amounting to a third part of their
 “ earnings, and some duties in that country being paid in kind, when
 “ the day came on which the payment of the tax commenced, all the
 “ black women went with their third pot, to the door of the king’s
 “ palace, where they told the soldiers on guard, they were come to

“ pay
 A

“ pay his majesty’s tax in kind: after much mirth amongst the crowd
 “ assembled on the occasion, they were civilly desired to retire with
 “ their loads, which they refused, and insisted upon paying the tax
 “ their own way; till the king sent them an order to depart, on his
 “ royal promise, that the tax should be abolished, which was ac-
 “ cordingly done.”

THE only rational taxes under the Roman government, which have been copied by modern states, are the land and capitation taxes, and some duties on the importation of merchandize, which, together with the twentieth part of the purchase money on the sale of slaves, formed the revenue destined to defray the public expences of the state, under the emperors; and this fund was distinguished by the title *Ærarium**; but it is to be observed, that the produce of the twentieth on the sale of slaves was kept apart in the temple of Saturn, being stiled *Sanctum Ærarium*, the Holy Treasure, not to be touched but upon the most urgent and extraordinary emergencies; so that when Julius Cæsar, amongst other violations of the freedom of his country, forced open the temple, and stole the treasure it contained, it is said, by some historians, that this fund amounted to two millions of our money; an immense sum in those days!

As to the articles, which composed their *Fiscum*, or revenue set apart for the maintenance of the prince, or chief magistrates, it consisted of fines and confiscations awarded in the courts of judicature for transgressions of the laws; of estates left without heirs; of treasures found, discovered, or bequeathed to unworthy persons, &c; so that this revenue was always fluctuating and uncertain; and no general tax could be levied on the people for the maintenance of their sovereigns or chief magistrates, while Rome enjoyed any remains of civil liberty.

UPON the total dissolution of the Roman empire, Europe was overrun by barbarous nations; who supported their power, by the military services of the people.

THE chiefs who established the feudal kingdoms, found themselves in a fluctuating situation, owing to the opposition of the barons, or

* The Treasury, or Exchequer. *Ainsworth.*

principal vassals, who frequently made themselves independant, erecting themselves into little principalities. While power remained thus distributed into many divisions, no regular system of supplying a public revenue could be established; but aids in kind, and in specie, were oppressively extorted by each chief, and by the inferior, independant barons, in their respective districts, according to caprice, and the good or bad disposition of the ruling powers, without any fixed principle. But when the power of these barons was subdued, and regular systems of government prevailed generally in Europe, wars became less frequent, military services grew out of date, and the revenue principle of taxation was recurred to, as in ancient times.

THE riches and strength of a state began now to be estimated, not by its possession of mines of silver and gold, nor yet by the quantity of treasure amassed, and hoarded up in coffers, but by the number, industry and commercial spirit of its inhabitants; by which a circulation of money became general, the state flourished, and the mass of the people, not a few individuals, such as barons and military chiefs, were made easy and happy in their circumstances.

It was much about this æra, that the Jews, being impolitically banished from some European states, retired to others, and invented bills of exchange, as a means of drawing their property out of those countries they were obliged to quit.

A plain proof, that though they were persecuted, and exiled on false principles of policy and religion, by the rulers of different nations, there were not wanting men of high honour, and distinguished integrity, in every country, who disapproved these measures, and honestly remitted to them, in bills on their correspondents, the property they had been obliged to abandon.

THE chief residence of the exiled Jews was Lombardy; from which country they afterwards emigrated to every state, whose free constitution would admit of their settling, though under severe limitations and restrictions.

HAVING converted their effects, as we have seen, into negociable bills of exchange, and by that means likewise into money, they established

established a traffic, at that time unknown in Europe, and therefore falsely stiled, by many respectable authors, a new invention: "The lending out money at interest."---A business openly carried on in the Roman empire; and which, towards its decline, was loudly complained of, having degenerated into oppressive, extortionate USURY.

LOMBARDY, by these means, became the general market for money. Extravagant needy princes mortgaged their lands and principalities, to obtain sums of money of the Jews for emergent occasions, and sometimes, they were so distressed, as to be obliged to pawn their jewels, and the regalia of their crowns; on such domestic occasions, as to provide dowries for their daughters; and to furnish out sumptuous entertainments, and costly public shews, coronations, marriages and other such events.---The idea of national credit, is reputed to owe its origin to these loans made to princes, on the basis of private credit.

BUT we must not confound this with mercantile credit, an error some great writers have fallen into; for though paper credit, as a medium of exchanges, instead of money, was introduced generally among the nations of Europe, by means of these loans, yet true mercantile credit, that which is usually given for a stated, customary time, on merchandize, and known by the name of book-debt, is as ancient as commerce itself.

IN proportion as paper-credit increased, by bills of EXCHANGE, and private obligations, such as bonds, promissary notes, and mortgage deeds; loans became more frequent; and money being thus easily obtained, the principle of borrowing became universal and irreproachable; because it was practised by princes and whole communities, as well as by individuals.

IN process of time, it became customary to raise money in most nations of Europe, on a branch of taxes assigned to the lender for the reimbursement of his principal and interest: this operation was called farming the public revenues of a state, and still subsists in France. But as the commerce of the states of Europe was trifling at the time, when paper-credit was first established, few governments could borrow money of their own subjects, for they had not the means of acquiring wealth,

wealth, therefore the Jews of Lombardy were applied to; and these money negotiations having brought them more intimately acquainted with the ministers and agents of the princes of Europe, some of these, more enlightened than the rest, discovered the commercial genius of this industrious, persecuted people; found that it might be turned to the advantage of the state, that should protect them; and on this principle, gave them encouragement to settle in their respective countries.

So early as the reign of Edward the Confessor, we find them settled in England; but in such a manner, as plainly shews the unhappy situation of these wanderers at that æra; for by the twenty-second law of the Confessor, all the Jews in the kingdom are declared to be under the king's protection; or rather slaves to the king, for it adds, "the Jews and all that are their's, are the king's." Even for this partial protection, they paid very dear; and yet all the impositions laid on them, could not secure them in this country, from the arbitrary dispositions of future kings, and the savage bigotry of their subjects; so that they were always on the wing, transporting their persons and effects from place to place, in the most secret manner, thereby increasing the negociation of bills of exchange, and extending the idea of paper credit; but the end of encouraging them to settle in England, which was to improve the commerce, and add to the riches of the state, by the certainty, readiness and universality of their communication with all trading nations, was defeated by the intolerant spirit of the times, and the avarice of our kings.

ON the accession of Richard the First, numbers came over to England, and consulting with their brethren in London, it was resolved to make a large free gift to Richard on the day of his coronation; accordingly the deputies attended for that purpose, richly dressed; but the populace, inflamed by the monks and friars, cruelly massacred them. Richard hung up the ringleaders of this assassination, but these unfortunate people did not perceive that he meant to protect them, only for the sake of their riches; and, therefore, notwithstanding what had happened, there remained great numbers in all parts of the kingdom, who the following year underwent the same fate.

AT

AT Lynn, Norwich, Stamford and Lincoln, the mad populace pillaged their effects, burnt their houses to the ground, and then murdered them. But at York, the most horrid scene of cruelty was exhibited; for the governor of the castle having given refuge to five hundred of these unfortunate people, besides women and children; the high-sheriff, at the head of the populace, attacked the castle; and the Jews, having in vain offered a large sum of money to be permitted to retire, even without any effects, an ancient rabbin persuaded them to destroy themselves; which was effected in the following manner: every master of a family cut his wife and children's throats, and his servants; after which, he dispatched himself.

NOT even this dismal tragedy could prevent others of this tribe from coming over in more favourable times; for in the reign of HENRY III. they were so well established, were grown so rich, and had got possession of so much land for the loan of money, that an act of parliament was made, that no Jew should enjoy a freehold in any manor, land or estate, by charter, gift, obligation or otherwise; which law remains in force to this hour: and in the following reign, they were banished the kingdom for ever; their estates were likewise confiscated to the king's use, except such sums as were necessary to defray the expences of their voyage to the continent: they were charged with having made themselves universally odious by usury and extortion. But, upon principles of sound policy, they have since been re-admitted, and enjoy most of the essential rights of other subjects.

I HAVE been thus particular in their history, for two special reasons: first, because we owe the origin and introduction of paper-credit, and of our modern revenue principles, to these money-making people; and secondly, because we have still some illiberal people amongst us, who wish to see the oppressions, to which superstition, prejudice and avarice gave birth, in former times, revived in our days. Upon every trifling occasion, the murmurs of discontented, envious men, break forth; and our public prints are full of projects for burthening with taxes, or exiling, the very instruments of the extensive power of the British empire, and of the affluence of its chief citizens. Against all such dangerous

innovators, and shallow politicians, a wise administration will always be upon its guard, and will not suffer their arguments to have any weight, till they can prove that the unrivalled public credit of this kingdom is a national evil; for while we acknowledge it to be the support of universal commerce, it must be our interest to protect and encourage all worthy men of this denomination, and not to confound them indiscriminately with the unworthy, of which there are some to be found in every religious and civil society on earth.

MORTGAGING their domains, borrowing money on their jewels, and other such temporary expedients, being found inadequate to the wants of the princes of Europe, as their ambition and luxury increased; aids and subsidies, from the property of their subjects, were occasionally granted upon very extraordinary occasions, either for the maintenance of the king's personal dignity, or for national services. These aids were originally granted in kind; and suited, in their very nature, to the occasions for which they were required. When, for instance, a king of England, in the early periods of our history, asked a subsidy for his domestic concerns, it was granted him in wool; the care of converting it into money being left to the royal merchant, and his agents. But if he wanted to go to war, each county furnished its quota of ships, seamen and land forces; and either paid for, or provided provisions and stores.

A REVOLUTION in the system of polity at length taking place, with respect to England, in consequence of which military service in person was abolished, and wool prohibited to be exported; subsidies were granted in specie, by the creation of taxes; but the produce of these being slow and uncertain, it often happened, that the emergency was such as required, on the instant, the gross sum these taxes could only furnish, in the course of a year; therefore, money was borrowed on the estimate of the annual income, by anticipation, or it was farmed out, for a certain sum. When the inconveniences and oppressions attending these methods made them odious, then another expedient was fallen upon, which was to raise the supplies for the extra-demands of the state within the year, by what were called perennial ways and means;

means; the chief of which was, by monthly, or half yearly assessments on every county throughout the kingdom. But, at length, extent of territory, by conquest and colonization, increase of commerce, and the multiplication of political connections, all of which involved the powers of Europe in long and expensive wars, rendered it impossible, in countries destitute of mines of gold and silver, to raise the large supplies, now become requisite, by any rational means, within the year, so as to entail no debt on the next.

THEN it was that public credit was introduced into France and England, on the same principles: that of borrowing of the natives and of foreigners, immense sums, on determinate or perpetual annuities; for the payment of which certain funds were created and appropriated, whereby taxes became hereditarily fixed on the subjects, yet unborn, of both countries.

THE concise, historical review we have made of the sources of the public revenues of ancient states and empires, is sufficient for our purpose; which was to deduce the origin of public credit, the basis of the funding system: a system that, with a few occasional variations, adapted to particular times and circumstances, has been steadily pursued in Great Britain, from the Revolution to this hour; and has proved an inexhaustible treasure, amply compensating for the want of mines of the precious metals, and answering every purpose of the ancients, without reducing our government to the fatal necessity of pillaging conquered countries, of selling her protection and alliance, or of suffering her dependant colonies to be harassed and oppressed by tyrannic prefects.

BUT this fruitful expedient, owing to the expensive, though successful wars we have carried on, since we first had recourse to it, has brought upon ourselves, and entailed upon generations to come, a reputed national debt, amounting to a sum almost incredible; a circumstance, in the opinions of many men of cool judgement and sound understanding, extremely alarming. It is, therefore, become a subject of the most serious and critical enquiry, whether the public credit of Great Britain,

and its funding system founded thereon, proceeds on true or false revenue principles; in other terms, whether it will still continue to be the support of the prosperity of this kingdom; or, in the end, be productive of some dreadful revolution.

It was with the utmost diffidence I first entered upon the discussion of this delicate point; but it is with great pleasure I now inform my readers, that while this part of my work has been under my hands preparing for the press, a most elaborate treatise on circulation and the English funds, has appeared in the French language*, unanimously attributed to the masterly pen of Mr. Pinto, the celebrated author of the Essay on Luxury, and of the Letter on Card-playing, so well known, and so justly admired, in France, Holland and England†.

In this treatise, I happily find my own sentiments, respecting our national debt, supported by some incontrovertible arguments, which, though they occurred to me, and many of my readers will recollect were mentioned in my lectures, wanted the aid of additional authority, and a more ample illustration, which I am now enabled to give them. To the information I have gained from the treatise on circulation, the public are indebted for the clear decision I shall presume to make in favour of our funding system, notwithstanding all the acknowledged, or reputed disadvantages attending it.

BUT, after paying this debt of gratitude to Mr. Pinto, it is but justice to myself and to the English press, to acquaint my countrymen, that there is a want of candour in this gentleman, in laying claim to the first discovery and publication of the following hypothesis; "That the public credit and funds of England are the sources of its power, extensive commerce, and national glory." So long since as the year 1761, I gave it as my humble opinion, "That, independant of the

* *Traité de la Circulation et du Credit: contenant une Analyse Raisonnée des Fonds d'Angleterre, & de ce qu'on appelle Commerce, ou jeu d'Actions; un examen critique de plusieurs Traités sur les impôts, les Finances, &c.* A Amsterdam, chez Marc. Michel Ray, 1771. Octavo.

† *Essai sur le Luxe.* A. Amsterdam, 1762. *Lettres sur le jeu des Cartes.* A Londres, 1768.

“ mischiefs arising from stock-jobbing, the stupendous fabric of public credit had accomplished the greatest events for the glory, welfare and preservation of these realms* ;” and, as my little piece has gone through several editions in London, was translated into the French language, and was inserted, by detached pieces, in the *Leyden Gazette*, soon after its publication, it is hardly possible it should have escaped the notice of our author; much less, that well informed Englishmen should tell him at Paris, after the peace, “ That his system, as to our national debt, was quite new† .”

SIR James Stuart's *Enquiry into the Principles of Political OEconomy*, an excellent work, which I have frequently had occasion to mention in the preceding treatises, was likewise published at London in 1767; and in the chapters on circulation, public credit, debts and taxes, it will be found, that this judicious writer was thoroughly sensible of the solidity and national advantages of public credit; and is so far from apprehending any bad consequences from the national debt, that he is of opinion we may safely go on in the same way, as long as we can find funds to pay the annual interest on any fresh debts government may contract. I cannot therefore admit, that Mr. Pinto “ has opened the eyes of Englishmen and foreigners on the subject:” with respect to the latter, however, he has certainly taken the most effectual means to dissipate their alarms, and to encourage them to vest their property in the British funds, of which he gives them an intelligent satisfactory explanation; and for which, the British government ought to make him some honorary acknowledgement.

If the love of fame is laudable, if a desire to live, after death, in the remembrance of our countrymen, is commendable, this little digression will be pardoned; and, there is an honest pride in contending for the

* See *Every Man his own Broker*, by T. Mortimer; first edit. 1761; or seventh edit. 1769. London, printed for S. Hooper.

† In 1768, being more fully convinced of the truth of the proposition I had advanced in 1761, I published an anonymous pamphlet on the subject entitled “ *The National Debt, no National Grievance* ;” which was well received by the public, and is now out of print.

honour of having been in the least degree useful to the community of which we are members. These motives have animated me, in this case, to assert my right; but it is now time to proceed to the second part of the Element of Finances; in which the nature and extent of the public credit of Great Britain shall be amply delineated; and our funding system justified, on the most undeniable principles.



P A R T II.

ON THE

Nature, Solidity, Present Extent, and National Advantages

OF THE

PUBLIC CREDIT, AND FUNDING SYSTEM

OF

G R E A T B R I T A I N.

I SHALL be very concise in my definition of public credit; because I imagine the subject is pretty well understood in this kingdom, so many persons being concerned in its present, extensive operations.

PUBLIC CREDIT, as it respects money transactions, and particularly the system of Finances, or the administration of the revenues of kingdoms, means no more, than that mutual confidence between government and the people, which enables the former to obtain, by disposing the latter to contribute, very large portions of their personal estates, to supply the public exigences of the state, on great emergencies; upon the strength of obligations contracted, and promised to be punctually performed, in future time. This has been carried to a greater height in England of late years, than ever was imagined in any other country, or conceived to be possible in this. In short, it has astonished and perplexed some of the powers of Europe, and has been the terror of others*.

No age, no history of any country, ancient or modern, has been able to produce such a glorious instance of the effect of inviolate constitutional faith and honour on the part of the borrowers; or of such unlimited and chearful confidence, on the part of the lenders.

* La dette nationale en Angleterre, et les fonds qui la composent, connu sous le nom d'annuités; l'espece de commerce & de jeu qu'on en fait, sont devenus depuis quelques tems l'object de l'attention des puissances, *Traité de la Circulation et du Credit*, p. 31.

THIS is meant as a deserved eulogium on the parties, merely as DEBTORS and CREDITORS. The consequences, to the rest of the nation, of this vast paper-castle, we must discuss more minutely hereafter.

LET us now enquire by what means the fabrick of public credit has been erected in this kingdom.

WHATEVER is established by the authority, and common consent of a nation, to be the medium of their mutual exchanges with each other, is properly the money of that nation. It may, therefore, consist of gold, silver, and copper coin; or of paper; as bills of exchange, promissary notes, bonds, and other securities for specie; all of them answering one and the same purpose: GENERAL CIRCULATION.

ON this principle, banks of circulation were formed; being an improvement on banks for mere deposit.

AND on the good faith of banks of circulation, together with a political application of the principle, and of the advantages arising from it, was planned the system of borrowing money on public, or national credit, in England. The faith of parliament having the same effect as the inviolate credit of banks; and being substituted in the place; that is to say, to supply the defect of amassed treasures, or of mines of the precious metals.

THE general definition of a bank, means no more, than a public repository for money, to be refunded on demand.

BUT banks on this limited scheme not being generally useful to commerce, improvements were made on this idea of depositing money in banks, at first only intended for the convenience and security of private persons; and the Italian banks very early opened a circulation specie, by discounting and negotiating bills of exchange, and by purchasing or lending money on bullion, plate, jewels, and other valuable effects. For the knowledge of this profitable traffic they were indebted to the Jews, settled in Lombardy, who, partly for their own convenience, and partly on the principle of gain, assisted in the establishment of banks of circulation. In process of time, these banks acquired

acquired additional strength and new profits, by means of their credit, which enabled them to make their notes the medium of their exchanges, and to issue them in payment of demands on them, in the room of cash.

IN our dictionaries of commerce, you may find an ample detail of the construction of all the banks of Europe. My subject requires an attention only to two: the bank of Amsterdam, and the bank of England; the first having furnished the outlines of, and the last supported the structure of, public credit, and of paper-money, in this country.

THE bank of Amsterdam was founded at the beginning of the last century; the republic of Holland having already viewed, with a wishful eye, the national advantages arising to the states of Venice from their bank. They, therefore, took the advantage of favourable circumstances---peace, commercial prosperity, and a redundancy of cash---to form a bank, which was at once to be a repository for money, and to supply its place in commercial transactions: for, by an ordinance, at the time of its establishment, the payment of bills of exchange, and of merchandize purchased in wholesale quantities, must be made only in assignments on the bank, which cannot be refused; and thus millions are circulated in a day, without the intervention of the precious metals, by simple transfers, or assignments on the bank. But for the convenience of strangers and of retailers, there are a set of cashiers, out of the bank, who are always ready to issue cash for bank assignments; and no sum is taken in at the bank, from private persons, under three hundred florins, about thirty pounds sterling. By these means, there is always specie enough current for the purposes of common domestic circulation: and though this famous bank does not avail itself of issuing notes of credit, yet its reputation, through the facility of its transfers, and the prevailing notion of its vast treasures, real or imaginary, was carried to such a height, that it surpassed all other banks in Europe, till that of England began to flourish; and, on account of its improvement of the Amsterdam plan, to gain the preference.

WILLIAM III. established the bank of England, upon some of the outlines of that of Amsterdam, with these material improvements. No persons are constrained to pay, or to receive payment in bank notes;

the matter is left open, free and optionable, agreeable to the genius of the British nation.

THE original proprietors, or subscribers to the fund which formed the capital of the Bank of England, had four *per cent.* annual interest, from the time of making the deposit; nor was the whole principal sum ever called for, I believe only seventy-five *per cent.* Thus they have enjoyed four *per cent.* on a nominal £100 share; this has likewise risen, by the profits of the company, to five and a half *per cent.*; besides which, their original nominal £100 share has risen to be worth £160, and sometimes more: whereas the contributors to the foundation of the Bank of Amsterdam, have never received any other profit, but that of the rise and fall of the *agio*, on buying and selling, which varies from three to six *per cent.* I speak of the public; what the states or the directors may gain, is as great a secret as the treasures of this bank; estimated, by some writers, at twenty-eight millions sterling, in gold and silver bars and specie. But Sir William Temple, a very discerning man, observes, that there was no forming an adequate notion of its real riches; for though they shew a great quantity of ingots of gold and silver, in a large vault under the town-house, yet the sacks standing by them, and said to contain coin, may, or may not, as they are never inspected but by the burgomasters. It is most likely, the greatest part of their treasure is ideal; and that King William was in the secret, since he so readily pursued the same principles of public credit in England.

IN every reputable bank, whose notes on demand enter into circulation the same as specie, one third of the amount of their paper-credit will always be a sufficiency of coin to keep their cash payments regular; and so long as money can be instantly had for their notes, these will always have the preference, on account of the facility of transport, and to avoid the time and trouble of tale, in large sums.

BUT King William extended the Dutch plan, by constituting annuities determinate and perpetual, as a consideration for capital sums borrowed; and these were made transferable on the very principle of the transfers of the bank at Amsterdam.

THIS

THIS is the true origin of the funding scheme; and the history of the generation of brokers, bears the same date. It is likewise remarkable, that their commission for buying and selling is an eighth *per cent*; exactly the same as is taken by the agents of the bank assignments at Amsterdam. But the misfortune attending the funding system at the Revolution, was, That want of affection, a diffidence of government, and the fear of another revolution, prevented King William from profiting by the plenty of money then unemployed in the nation, and obliged him to tender very high interest, which opened the door to all the excises that have been entailed on us.

SIR JAMES STUART justly observes, That when money regorges in the hands of private persons, and cannot be employed in trade or purchasing lands to advantage, it becomes useless: large capitals being only valued for the interest they will bear. Had William's government been fixed, and undisturbed by any apprehensions of rebellions and revolts, he might have borrowed money at two *per cent*. instead of six.

BUT the Jews, whose correspondence is general, took advantage of his situation, and kept up the value of money, on private securities, as high as possible, that the government might be obliged to tender the same on more profitable terms: good private credit being then deemed more secure than the public credit of an unsettled government.

IT is not necessary for me to run through a detail of all the life annuities, transferable perpetual annuities, lotteries, &c. introduced after this period. You will readily perceive that the imaginary wealth, the reputation of the reality of which is kept up by the assignments or transfers of the bank of Amsterdam, is the very paper-castle we have erected and fortified on every side with such success in England.

THE public market for our funds, open every day, holidays excepted, is, to people possessed of personal estates, exactly the same as a general bank of circulation: and the transfer-books of the sundry annuities constituting the national debt, are, to all intents and purposes, the figures or representatives of cash, or the medium of exchanges; and will so continue, as long as the market continues open, which will be as long as the annual interest is regularly paid when due.

AFTER the fatal year 1720, when, if any thing could have destroyed public credit in this kingdom, it must have expired, men were generally solicitous about the probability of refunding the capital, or principal sum lent to government: but since the extension of the funding system has opened a general market for the stocks, the whole attention of the people concerned in them should properly be, and it chiefly is, confined to the prospect of the regular payment of the interest. For as to the principal sum it is recoverable at market every day.

THE people in France still retain their anxiety and concern for the restoration of their capitals, for this reason: because their government hath violated its public faith, by stopping the payment of the interest of its loans; and therefore, there is not a daily marketable price to their actions, as there is to our funds. The financier, therefore, at the head of the revenue-department in France, must study the means of refunding the principal after a certain term, and of providing for the interest in the interim. Unable to accomplish either in the last war, the public credit of France was almost ruined; for they stopt payment; and called this breach of faith, one of the calamities of war.

WHILE the public credit of England, owing to the inviolate faith of parliament, was rising every day, and the consequences of an open market, and current price for our funds was, That all the unemployed money in Europe was thrown into them; which increased our national powers; gave us the capitals of foreigners at a moderate interest, to increase general circulation; to keep up the prices of our funds; and, if employed in trade, in the course of circulation, to yield a profit of six *per cent* over and above the interest paid for it.

I HAVE said, that the extent of our public credit in the last war, augmented our national powers.---Hear what a late writer says on this head.

“ IN point of natural wealth, France is by far the richest of the two
 “ kingdoms.---How comes it then that she is found so infinitely infe-
 “ rior to England! the riches of the latter kingdom are able to raise
 “ up armies out of stone! She has nothing to do, but to stamp with her
 “ foot, and Pompey's legions spring up at her command! The gold
 “ and

“ and silver of France is twice as much as that of England; and yet
“ one country seems to be in want of common wealth, and the other
“ disgorges its guineas all over Europe!---All!---All! is public credit
“ and paper!---The most amazing structure that the wit of man ever
“ erected!---The temple of Solomon has been long boasted of in the
“ world; and its costing some forty or fifty millions: a child's play-
“ thing to the architecture of the English! They have expended three
“ times as much on an edifice, and hung it in the air! The most
“ ethereal building surely that ever waved to the winds of Heaven!”

PUBLIC CREDIT then is a national good; it raises us fleets and armies more expeditiously than the mint could coin the precious metals.

PAPER, the representative of these, by means of our national credit, raises twelve millions in a few hours, by the signatures of eight or ten merchants, of vast property and influence, subscribers for themselves and friends: the authority of the nation, its legislative body, stamps its currency, and makes it, in an instant, not only the medium of our exchanges between ourselves, but a valuable consideration for the unemployed money of foreigners.

By this method of raising the prodigious sums wanted, for the public service, in time of war, we avoid the tedious and oppressive modes formerly in practice here, and still subsisting in France; such as heavy capitations, or poll-taxes; monthly assessments on lands and personal estates; and other burthensome impositions: and we raise the supplies on the best revenue principle imaginable---By voluntary contributions, or loans from our own subjects and foreigners.

“ In fine, public securities are with us, become a kind of money;
“ and pass as readily, at the current price, as gold or silver. Wherever
“ any profitable undertaking offers itself, however expensive, there are
“ never wanting hands enough to embrace it. Our national debts
“ furnish our merchants with a species of money, that is continually
“ multiplying in their hands; and produces sure gain, besides the
“ profits of their commerce. This must enable them to trade for less
“ profit.---The small profit of the merchant renders the commodity
“ cheaper; causes a greater consumption; quickens the labour of the
“ common

“common people, and helps to spread arts and industry through the
“world*.”

It is not possible to add to this analysis of public credit, and its beneficial effects, without becoming tediously prolix; and indeed I most heartily subscribe to the opinion of Sir James Stuart: “The principles
“which influence the doctrine of public credit, are so few and so plain,
“that it is surprising to see how circumstances could possibly involve
“them in the obscurity into which we find them plunged on many
“occasions:” he might have added, by most writers on the subject, for want of precision.

HERE then let us rest the merits of the cause in behalf of public credit, till we have fairly and amply stated all the objections of its adversaries, and produced the whole catalogue of evils alledged to be the result of our extensive funding system. They have employed the pens of the greatest writers, and the tongues of the greatest orators in this kingdom, at different periods since the Revolution: yet, notwithstanding all their declamations, PUBLIC CREDIT has outlived the gloomy prophecies of its bankruptcy; is in a more flourishing condition at present than in any former time; and will support us triumphantly in twenty future wars against the united powers of the house of Bourbon; securing to us, likewise, our unrivalled commerce; if the treasury department is bestowed on able, resolute, honest ministers.

THE capital objections to the funding scheme were started at the time of its institution; and have continued ever since, with little or no variation; except that the murmurs of the people, and the declamations of both writers and speakers on the subject, have grown louder and more vehement, in proportion as the national debt and taxes have increased.

A NUMBER of projects have likewise been offered to the public, from time to time, for paying off or lessening this national debt; all of which have proved ideal, chimerical, or inadequate to the end proposed: even the expedient adopted by the legislature, the creation of the sinking fund, has failed; and the partial, occasional discharge of

* Hume on Public Credit.

one or two millions at different times, since the last peace, has only served to shew the imbecility of those ministers who have made so idle an application of the increasing revenue of the sinking fund; which I shall demonstrate, in the third part of this treatise, might have been much better employed.

THOSE two remarkable periods, the establishment of the sinking fund, in 1716, and the alienation of the same fund, in 1727, produced a number of dissertations from the press, and of very spirited debates in parliament, too long to be inserted in this place; and as the substance of all that was then said or written, against the funding system, and the national debt, has been assiduously selected and urged with double force by later opponents, I shall confine myself to them; but those who are desirous to have an opportunity of observing, that no new arguments have been advanced for some years, though the supposed grievance has continued to grow more and more intolerable every day, are requested to refer to the history of, and proceedings in parliament at the above-mentioned periods.

MR. HUME is, of all others, the most formidable adversary we have to encounter; his great reputation having stamped such an authority on his opinions, that they have passed currently with the public; and very few writers have ventured to enter the lists against a champion so universally protected and esteemed. Yet this celebrated historian, this admired philosopher, is vulnerable on his weak side; and it is in his Political Essays, that he has laid himself open to the attacks of criticism; his maxims being advanced with great boldness, without reserve, and with such a confidence of being founded on true principles, that it should seem as if the author himself looked upon them as incontrovertible.

As a proof of this, I need only cite his hypothesis with respect to public credit; to which subject I shall confine my strictures on his political opinions. “ One of these two events must happen; either
“ the nation must destroy public credit, or public credit will destroy
“ the nation: ’tis impossible they can both subsist together, after the
“ manner they have been hitherto managed in this, as well as in some
“ other

"other nations." This is the well known *postulatum* which has founded the alarm to the whole kingdom, and has propagated a general apprehension concerning the final consequence of the national debt: every speculative projector, every disappointed statesman, every pseudo patriot, every timid, or hypocondraical adventurer in the public funds, and all the ruined gamblers in 'Change Alley, have made this their common text, and have filled our ears with tedious essays and declamations on the approaching bankruptcy of the state: in times of war, adding to its horrors; and, in the halcyon days of peace, disturbing its repose, by their ill-judged intimidations. But we shall easily silence the disciples, if we are able to refute their master.

Our learned author examines the effect of public credit on our domestic and foreign concerns; and having found it, as he imagines, highly detrimental to both, he draws the striking conclusion we have just noticed.

WITH respect to the first, he observes, "That public stocks, being
 "a kind of paper-credit, have all the disadvantages attending that
 "species of money.---They banish gold and silver from the most con-
 "siderable commerce of the state, reduce them to common circulation,
 "and by that means render all provisions and labour dearer than
 "otherwise they would be.---That the taxes which are levied to pay
 "these debts, are apt to be a check upon industry, to heighten the
 "price of labour, and to be an oppression on the poorer sort.---That
 "foreigners possessing a share of our national funds, they render the
 "public, in a manner, tributary to them; and may, in time, occasion
 "the transport of our people and industry.---That the greatest part of
 "public stock being always in the hands of idle people, who live on
 "their revenue, our funds give great encouragement to an useless and
 "inactive life."

"THESE are the injuries which," he says, "arise to commerce and
 "industry, from our public funds; but though they are very con-
 "siderable, yet, in his idea, they are trivial, in comparison of the
 "prejudice which results to the state, considered as a body politic;
 "which must support itself in the society of nations, and have various
 "transactions

“ transactions with other states, in wars and negociations. The ill,
 “ there, is pure and unmixed, without any favourable circumstance to
 “ atone for it; and it is an ill too of a nature the highest and most
 “ important.”

ONE would imagine, after such a declaration, that we should be made acquainted with the nature of this evil; and that a political dissertation would have followed, to point out in what manner our weight and influence with foreign powers is impaired by our public funds: but here, Mr. Hume fails of his usual precision, and leaves the subject open to our conjectures, without offering the least elucidation, though the proposition, if true, is indeed of the most interesting and alarming nature. The very reverse, however, shall be proved, in its proper place; but this is not the only inconsistency in the celebrated Essay on Public Credit. In fact, what Mr. Hume has advanced in favour of our public securities, and on which he lays little or no stress himself, has proved strictly true in every respect; the advantages allowed by him to be derived from them, have, contrary to his opinion, considering the political circumstances and situation of the kingdom, overbalanced the ills that have resulted from them in our domestic œconomy. They have increased circulation and consumption; “ they have
 “ quickened the labour of the common people, to provide a surplus
 “ of commodities for exportation; and have helped to spread arts and
 “ industry through the whole society*.”

FROM the year 1752, when Mr. Hume wrote, to the present time, no performance of any reputation has appeared in opposition to the system of public credit and funding, except a very ingenious treatise, lately published by DR. PRICE, intitled, “ Observations on Reversionary Payments; on Schemes for providing Annuities for Widows, and for Persons in old Age, &c; and on the National Debts”†. The character of this respectable author, joined to his great skill and accuracy in arithmetical calculations, justly engaged the attention of the public to his observations on a subject, in which all ranks of men are more or less

* Compare p. 387 and 388 of the Essay on Public Credit, with p. 389, 395, and 396.

† London, printed for T. Cadell, 1772.

interested; and the general approbation this treatise met with, induced the Doctor to publish an Appeal to the Public on the Subject of the National Debt; the motives to which he declares to be, that the observations he had made on this head, in his Treatise on Reversionary Annuities, had been considered as very important, by the concurrent opinions of the best judges; but the managers of our public affairs not having favoured them with any attention, this was another reason for appealing to the public.

As I differ in opinion from this worthy author, and must take the liberty to shew the fallacy and inefficacy of his projects for paying off the national debt, under its proper head; it is but justice, before I state his arguments against the funding system, to acknowledge, that his Treatise on Reversionary Payments, so far as it respects schemes for providing annuities for widows, and for persons in old age, is a most useful, and, at this time, a most valuable performance; for government, with a supineness, ignorance, or negligence, absolutely unpardonable, has suffered a number of societies, some of them composed of obscure individuals, to raise capital sums, by different contributions from their fellow-subjects, on the most chimerical, vague plans imaginable; without authority, without law, and with hardly the shadow of sound judgment on their side.

SOCIETIES which, while they were undermining public credit, both commercial and political, by diverting sums of money from the channel of trade, (an evil so loudly complained of with respect to the national debt) partially favoured the reigning minister of the treasury department, by contributing to keep up the price of the public funds, the principal money being from time to time vested in them; and also gave government an opportunity of observing how capable that people must be, to bear further annual burthens, who could thus throw away five, ten, or twenty pounds *per annum*, on any delusive scheme, proposed by interested, or mistaken projectors.

It is impossible to read Dr. Price's introduction to his Treatise, and his proofs of the inadequateness of the plans of the several annuitant societies started up within these very few years, without lamenting the
folly

folly and avarice of mankind; at the same time, we cannot but wish that so valuable a member of society should be duly noticed and properly rewarded, for having conveyed such useful information to the public.

SOME of these societies are already dissolved, in consequence of Dr. Price's publication; and as it appears to be the benevolent intention of this gentleman, to suppress them entirely, he cannot take it ill, that, as a means of circulating his useful intelligence beyond the limits of his own work, I take the liberty of copying into mine, the following irrefragable truths:

“ THE general disposition which has lately shewn itself to encourage these societies, is a matter of the most serious concern; and ought, I think, to be taken under the notice of the legislature. The leading persons among the present members will be the first annuitants; they are sure of being gainers; and the more insufficient the scheme is, on which a society is formed, the greater will be the gains of the first annuitants. The same principle, therefore, that has produced and kept up other bubbles, has a tendency to preserve and promote these; and, for this reason, it is to be feared, that, in the present case, no arguments will be attended with any effect. The consideration, that the gain made by some in these societies, will be so much plunder taken from others, ought immediately to engage all to withdraw from them, who have any regard to justice and humanity; but experience proves, that this argument, when opposed to private interest, is apt to be too feeble in its influence.

“ IT cannot be said, with precision, how long these societies may continue their payments to annuitants, after beginning them. A continued increase, and a great proportion of young members, may support them for a longer time than I can foresee. But the longer they are supported by such means, the more mischief they must occasion.”

WE will now return to our subject; on which, in my humble opinion, Dr. Price is as much mistaken, as he is clear and decisive, on that of reversionary payments and annuitant societies.

HE has added but little to the general articles of impeachment brought by other writers against the national debt; and indeed, the chief intention of his attacking it at all, seems to have been the introduction of his proposals for lessening, and finally paying it off. It is evidently with this view, that he advances the following hypothesis; which is of the same tenour as Mr. Hume's, though expressed in other terms.

“THE practice of raising the necessary supplies for every national service, by borrowing money on interest, to be continued till the principal is discharged, must be in the highest degree detrimental to a kingdom, unless a plan is settled for putting its debts into a regular and certain course of payment. When this is not done, a kingdom, by such a practice, obliges itself to return, for every sum it borrows, infinitely greater sums; and, for the sake of a present advantage, subjects itself to a burden, which must be always growing heavier and heavier, till it becomes insupportable.”

IT being my professed design to explode all projects for paying off the national debt, I shall demonstrate, hereafter, that no scheme can be formed, in the present political circumstances of the nation, and considering the state into which its finances have been thrown, ever since the Revolution, meriting the attention of a judicious minister; and that the imaginary debt itself, taking the principal abstractedly, and apart from its annuities, or annual interests, is not an evil, nor liable to the objections indiscriminately thrown out against it.

AFTER recapitulating the evils enumerated by Hume and other writers, Dr. Price, with the becoming freedom of an independant gentleman, mentions more mischiefs, of a political nature, which he apprehends, are consequences of our present *exorbitant* debt.

“IT checks the exertions of the spirit of liberty in the kingdom. The tendency of every government is to despotism; and in this it must end, if the people are not constantly jealous and watchful. Opposition, therefore, and resistance, are often necessary. But they may throw things into confusion, and occasion the ruin of the public funds. The apprehension of this must influence all who have their
“ interest

“ interest connected with the preservation of the funds; and incline
“ them always to acquiescence and servility.

“ It exposes us to particular danger, from foreign as well as domestic
“ enemies; by making us fearful of war, and incapable of engaging in
“ it, however necessary, without the hazard of bringing on terrible
“ convulsions, by overwhelming public credit. And in case of another
“ war, should it continue long, we are in danger of either overwhelming
“ public credit, or of being terrified, by the apprehension of such a
“ calamity, into an ignominious and fatal peace.”

IN the appeal to the public, the Dr. dwells upon another calamity, which had been mentioned by most writers on the subject, as a consequence of the national debt: this is no other than DEPOPULATION; for which I have assigned various other causes, in my Elements of Commerce; and I find the very same sentiments in the appeal: I likewise have noticed, that our excises, and, in general, the mal-administration of our Finances, co-operate with the other mischiefs enumerated to discourage population, and to diminish the number of the people.

THE undue weight and influence in the constitution, which is thrown into the scale of the Crown, by having in its gift such a number of offices in the different departments of the treasury, for collecting and managing the public revenues, is not the least evil, charged on the national debt, by our ingenious author, and by a cotemporary writer, who has introduced it into a work of another nature*. On this head

“ * WITNESS the commissioners, and the multitude of dependents on the customs in
“ every port of the kingdom; the commissioners of excise, and their numerous subalterns,
“ in every inland district; the postmasters and their servants, planted in every town, and
“ upon every public road; the commissioners of the stamps, and their distributors, which
“ are full as scattered and full as numerous; the officers of the salt duty, which, though
“ a species of excise, and conducted in the same manner, are yet made a distinct corps
“ from the ordinary managers of that revenue; the surveyors of houses and windows; the
“ receivers of the land-tax; the managers of lotteries; and the commissioners of hackney-
“ coaches: all which are either mediately or immediately appointed by the crown, and
“ removeable at pleasure, without any reason assigned. These, it requires but little
“ penetration to see, must give that power, on which they depend for subsistence, an
“ influence most amazingly extensive.”

Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England, book i. chap. 8.

Dr. Price makes one remark, which is too curious to be omitted in this place. “ I look upon the public creditors as little better than a
 “ band of pensioners to the government; and it is more than probable,
 “ that had the nation been encumbered with our present debts, in the
 “ reigns of king CHARLES I. or JAMES II. the former would never
 “ have lost his life, nor the latter his crown.” To this opinion, I heartily subscribe, but on other principles; and, in the course of my reply, I shall make this an argument in favour of a large national debt.

THERE are three other grievances, which have been the general topics of conversation, and the subjects of most of our temporary essays in the public prints, on the national debt.

THE FIRST is, the draining the nation of its coin, for subsidies to foreign princes; to pay armies on the continent, in times of war; and the interest due to foreign stockholders, the creditors of the nation. Our internal exchanges, say these writers, are made in paper, current only at home; but these disbursements must be remitted in the precious metals.

THE SECOND is, the pernicious and fatal consequences of stock-jobbing, by which thousands of families have been ruined, and private credit is every day more or less affected: the spirit of gaming in the alley, having diffused itself amongst mercantile people, who waste their time, and alienate their property, in pursuit of the visionary schemes of the alley. If one British subject was to acquire a fortune, by ruining another, the evil would be of a private, not of a public nature; for the property lost and won by jobbing, would only change hands amongst ourselves. But since those protected spies, resident FOREIGN MINISTERS, under various denominations, by the courtesy of Europe, have been permitted to stay with us, after their commissions are executed, there is great reason to apprehend that their excellencies, with their secretaries, agents, and foreign friends, have taken, and will again take advantage of the folly of our people, and, by means of earlier intelligence than it is possible for the public to procure, gain immense sums in the alley, which they most probably carry out of the kingdom. To answer their purposes, they may likewise continually find us new
 subjects

subjects of alarm; and when any disputes arise between our courts and theirs, they may retard negociations for adjusting them amicably, till they have made their fortunes at Jonathan's.

THE THIRD, and the greatest evil of all in the whole catalogue, is, the number and perpetuity of our taxes, for the payment of the interest of the national debt.

To avoid prolixity, the sum of the heavy grievances complained of, has been confined within the most concise limits; great care has been taken to load it with as few quotations as possible; and it shall be my endeavour to observe the same rules in the refutation I am now to attempt, of every forcible objection to our extensive public credit, and the funding system built thereon.

IN the first place then, in answer to Mr. Hume, I presume to assert, "That the nation must support, not destroy PUBLIC CREDIT; and that PUBLIC CREDIT cannot destroy the nation."

THE arguments I advanced, and the proofs I adduced in support of this new hypothesis, those of my readers who attended my lectures repeatedly, will easily remember, especially as several gentlemen took notes; and I am obliged to mention this circumstance once for all, because my sentiments then delivered, and the clear reasonings of Mr. Pinto, since published, so perfectly coincide, that it would otherwise be very hard to discriminate our ideas; for we happen to have expressed ourselves as nearly as it is possible (considering the different idioms of the two languages) in the same terms; and we differ only in one point, that of stock-jobbing, a subject which will require a critical discussion under a separate head.

It has been premised, that the defence of public credit, and of the funding system maintained by it, is only undertaken in a comparative view; or, in other words, as preferable to any other plan, considering the circumstances, and the political situation of Great Britain since the Revolution. Had Mr. Hume, or any other writer, suggested a practical method of raising the large annual supplies which this kingdom has wanted in three successive wars, by perennial, or by any other ways and means, less burthensome to the people, and better adapted to

the political freedom of our constitution; there could be no necessity for insisting that public credit must be supported, and even extended, as far as it will bear, in defiance of speculative opposition.

IN historical deductions relative to civilized nations, where the system of government is likely to continue on the same plan for any number of years, not being liable to the frequent shocks and sudden revolutions of despotic monarchies, we have a right to reason upon future, from past events. On this principle, I beg leave to suppose, that Great Britain, at some future period, may be engaged in a war, which shall require military operations, as various and as expensive as those of the year 1761; and permit me to throw into the scale, a negociation, set on foot by her enemies, for a peace, which should accomplish every object she had in view in carrying on the war.

To support these military operations, in different quarters of the globe, with vigour, that we might be enabled in some measure to dictate the conditions of peace, sword in hand, and at the same time to strike full conviction, of our ability to continue the war, home to our enemy's court, an able minister, enjoying the confidence of the nation, demands supplies to the amount of TWELVE MILLIONS sterling, over and above the annual, permanent revenue of the state.

IN such a situation, what other resource could we possibly have, but that very public credit, and that identical funding system, so loudly complained of?

SUPPOSE all the declaimers against the national debt summoned to repair to the cabinet of the minister, or to deliver their sentiments to the legislative body of the nation in parliament; is there any one of their projects that would raise the twelve millions in question, by voluntary subscriptions from opulent subjects; by a mode equally agreeable to our ideas of civil liberty, and accompanied with that facility and dispatch which the exigency of the case would require? I confess I never yet met with a proposal that offered so much as the shadow of such powerful aids to government, at a crisis when its commerce, its national glory, and its political existence, as a free, independant state, were at stake; and I have not drawn an ideal,
illusive

illusive scene of some future period, merely to sport with your imaginations. Let the candid reader only cast a retrospective glance over the events of the year 1761, and he will find, that the situation and circumstances just described, were nearly, if not exactly, those of the British nation at that period.

WE had no alternative in that memorable year; but either to depend on public credit, which had been consolidated, by the successful administration of the minister; or to abandon all our glorious enterprizes by sea and land, and yield to the first offers of peace made by the court of Versailles, privately countenanced and supported by that of Madrid.

IN this, and on every similar situation in which this nation may be hereafter placed, every rational well-wisher to his country must own, that the advantages of public credit, by which we have contracted the national debt, more than indemnify us for all the real and imaginary evils it is said to have engendered.

THE happy consequences that followed the grant of TWELVE MILLIONS extra, for the year 1761, furnish me with a very short answer to one of the grievances mentioned by HUME, PRICE and BLACKSTONE, and already laid before you.

IT appears, from the events of that year, and from others, both of a prior and later date, that our national debt, instead of having a very bad effect on our transactions with foreign powers, has a very good one. For what power is there on earth that will not dread a nation whose revenue resources are infinite, by means of public credit; and whose subjects, however divided into parties in the idle times of peace, all unite, with the spirit and virtue of the ancient Romans, at the call of common danger; and exert a well combined, active force, to repel a common enemy, or to support their national glory!

OR what power will presume to propose to such a nation, dishonourable terms of peace, when at war; if a good understanding subsists between the king and the people; and a minister is at the helm of government, who is entitled to the confidence of both!

OUR national debt, therefore, is no national grievance in this respect;

and every argument having a tendency to shew that we are thereby made tributary to, or are intimidated by, foreign powers, should be considered as the effect of ignorance; or of interested motives, which may prompt men to publish such declarations, to justify a culpable timidity or supineness, when foreign powers, in times of peace, presume to insult a kingdom, so formidable by its naval power, and so fertile in resources, by means of its public credit.

THE mal-administration and misapplication of the immense sums raised on the solidity of our national credit, is a different subject: it is an abuse by no means chargeable on the funding system itself; and, therefore, not to be confounded with it in our exculpation of public credit. This is an error into which our opponents have fallen, but which we must carefully avoid; for it will be discovered, on a nearer view, that all the ills resulting from the establishment of public credit, arise from impolitic and partial taxes; from an unjust distribution of them; from the expensive mode of collecting them; and from a corrupt dissipation of their produce when collected: and that the plan of public credit, freed from these excrescences, is a master-piece of human policy.

It is with great reluctance I find myself obliged to expose another very capital error in Mr. Hume's Essay on Public Credit; but as Mr. Pinto has taken the same liberty, I hope he will excuse it in a fellow-citizen. The capital advantage we derive from public credit, is an increased CIRCULATION of a sign or representative of the precious metals, answering all the purposes, in our domestic intercourses with each other, of the greatest abundance of coin; and it is the great circulation so freely and extensively carried on through all parts of the kingdom, which regenerates public credit, and multiplies the riches and national power of the state; in fine, it is this circulation which raises us fleets and armies, and enables this little island, an inconsiderable spot on the map of the world, to hold empire and dominion in its most distant regions, and to enrich its inhabitants, by the profits of a commercial intercourse with every known part of it.

YET this CIRCULATION Mr. Hume declares he does not understand; he says, it is a word which is here in the mouth of every body; and
has

has also got abroad, and is much employed by foreign writers, in imitation of the English; that it serves as an account for every thing; and that though he has sought for its meaning, in the present subject, ever since he was a school-boy, he had never yet been able to discover it: he then asks, what possible advantage the nation can reap by the easy transference of stock from hand to hand; or if there is any parallel to be drawn from the circulation of other commodities, to that of chequer-notes and India bonds? Strange indeed it is, that this truly respectable author should answer his own problem in his very next page; that he should explain the meaning of CIRCULATION, as it respects public credit, in the happiest terms; and the best adapted to point out the signal advantages the nation derives from it! "Public securities are, with us, become a kind of money, and pass as readily at the current price, as gold or silver. Our national debts furnish our merchants with a species of money that is continually multiplying in their hands, and produces sure gain, besides the profits of their commerce."

It should seem as if Mr. Hume is now fully convinced of the important meaning of the word CIRCULATION, applied to our funds; since Mr. Pinto mentions his having had a conversation with him at Paris, in which he expressed his acknowledgments to the author of the *Treatise on Circulation* for having refuted him*; and we have great reason to hope, from his most amiable character, that he will rectify the mistaken notions he has published on this subject; for as they come from so able a pen, they may hurt the cause of public credit, being

* De tous ceux qui ont pris le change sur la dette nationale d'Angleterre, aucun ne m'a surpris d'avantage que le célèbre Mr. Hume. J'ai eu l'honneur de le connoître à Paris, & j'ai reconnu avec un plaisir infini, que son caractère étoit supérieur à son esprit; c'est à la vérité qu'il doit cet éloge. Ce grand homme a écrit avant la dernière paix, un *Essai sur le Credit Public*, que je n'avois pas lu lorsque je composai la première partie de mon *Essai sur la Circulation*. On me l'a indiqué depuis, et j'ai été d'abord fâché de trouver que mon écrit parût précisément une réfutation du sien. Il vint quelques-tems après à Paris; il fut très content de mon essai; je me flatte que M. Hume rectifiera un jour quelques-unes de ses idées sur la circulation et le credit public. *Traité de Circulation, &c.*

read and believed by thousands, who may never condescend to peruse the refutations of his sentiments, by writers of less note.

THE late celebrated Bishop of Cloyne, Dr. Berkeley, gave me the first idea of opposing the popular opinion; that the national debt is a great grievance. A short time before I wrote my little treatise on the funds, intitled, Every Man his own Broker, I accidentally met with the following questions, in a pamphlet, published in Ireland, called the Querist.

“WHETHER the credit of the public funds is not a mine of gold to England; and whether any measures taken to diminish it, are not to be greatly dreaded?”

“WHETHER this credit is not the principal advantage England has over France, and indeed over all the states of Europe?”

FROM the instant I perused these questions, I determined them in the affirmative; in fact, they seemed self-evident propositions: yet as many persons, who had made the funds a particular study, both wrote and spoke against them, with great vehemence, and apparent strength of argument, it became necessary to produce proofs, drawn from daily observation, from the actual circumstances of the kingdom, and from the great events accomplished solely by means of that public credit and national debt, which men so generally decried.

THE theory of the funds was then but little known; and though the effects of our public credit grew every day more and more astonishing, yet, but little enquiry was made into the principles on which it proceeded. Even the very ministers who experienced its fertility, had little more than precedent to go by. No wonder, therefore, that every breath of rumour should affect these funds; or that timid people should feel all the horrors of an expectant national bankruptcy; which might reduce them, in a moment, from a state of affluence to abject poverty. It was very evident, that the increase of paper credit, by promoting a general circulation of a new species of money, quickened industry and labour, and augmented not only the value, but the demand, for the produce of every art and manufacture. But the grand difficulty was, how to explain the universality of this circulation, the
nature

nature of its powers, the effects it operates, and the solidity of its basis, PUBLIC CREDIT, in so clear a manner as to be comprehended by the mass of persons interested in the subject; and to remove the prejudices and prepossessions of men of learning and candour, who, equally sollicitous for the prosperity of their country, strenuously insist on the necessity of destroying public credit, by annihilating the national debt; while myself, and some cotemporary writers, contend for the cultivation and support of this bulwark of the state.

HERE, I once again acknowledge mine, and the nation's obligation, to our friend at the Hague: his treatise, written expressly to clear up this point, has made the doctrine of circulation intelligent to the meanest capacity. It is possible, my illustrations might be satisfactory to those gentlemen who attended my lectures; but on so general a subject, concurrent opinions, and the clearest demonstrations are expected, if they can be obtained. I have therefore translated such parts of this celebrated treatise, as are requisite to clear up all doubts concerning the benefits we have derived from the national debt, by means of public credit; and incorporated them with my own explanations on the same subject.

“ THE national debt of England has enriched the nation; and thus
“ I prove it. By every new loan the government, through the means
“ of appropriating certain taxes to pay the interest, created a new and
“ artificial capital, which existed not before, which becomes per-
“ manent, fixed, solid; and which, by the assistance of public credit,
“ circulates to the public advantage, as much as if it was an actual
“ treasure in money with which the kingdom was enriched.” At the
same time let it be remembered, that the real principal sum borrowed,
and which this artificial capital supplies the place of to the lenders,
becomes the resource of the state, for supporting its national glory;
and for protecting and extending its commerce, by which the relative
riches of the whole kingdom are likewise multiplied. “ Let us take,
“ for example, the TWELVE MILLIONS which England borrowed in
“ 1761; let us examine what became of them. Is it not true, that
“ a great part of this sum was expended in the nation? (he should
have

“ have said, and its colonies) the subsidies, and a part of what was
 “ expended in Germany, is all that can be called an entire loss. I say
 “ a part only; because the English profited by sundry contracts for
 “ supplying the armies on the continent, in which their own subjects
 “ were employed; besides, in watering Germany, they only fertilize a
 “ country by whose commerce they are benefited. The riches of
 “ Germany always turn to the advantage of the commercial nations.
 “ But I will confine myself solely to this observation: it is incontestably
 “ true, that a great part of this loan was employed and circulated in
 “ the kingdom. Thus England preserved within itself a great part of
 “ these twelve millions, which were dispersed and absorbed at home;
 “ and the numerary riches of her creditors, for the most part her own
 “ subjects, was besides augmented by twelve millions which did not
 “ exist before.

“ It is evident then, that in 1762, there must be found a great
 “ number of persons, in the English nation, who had made their
 “ fortunes, and been enriched by the expenditure of the twelve millions
 “ borrowed by government, for the public service, in the year 1761;
 “ and who consequently are in a condition, in their turn, to lend to
 “ that government which has enriched them: and this is what actually
 “ happens. They restore the same specie they have received; and the
 “ lenders of the preceding, have a new fund of credit, by means of
 “ which they are enabled to draw new specie from foreigners and
 “ natives, to subscribe to new funds; which proves,

“ 1, THE augmentation of the numerary riches of the state,” by the
 creation of artificial capitals;

“ 2, THAT the loans are always made with nearly the same specie;

“ 3, THAT the old funds favour the creation of new loans; and,

“ 4, THAT they have enriched the nation.

“ If you would have a more convincing proof that the nominal
 “ capital of about one hundred and thirty millions sterling, which the
 “ English nation has in annuities, and other fictitious funds, or the
 “ greatest part of them, would not have existed without the creation
 “ of these funds; you have only to ask, in what this capital must
 consist,

“ consist, in case there were no such funds? Could it be in money?
 “ Is there so much in all Europe, silver plate excepted? Could it be
 “ in lands? The confines of Great Britain cannot be extended. The
 “ value of lands is already considerably augmented; and without an
 “ increased population, they cannot be meliorated *. Could it be in
 “ ships, or in commerce? These two objects have likewise their limits,
 “ proportioned to the number of inhabitants. Commodities cannot be
 “ amassed beyond the demand for them; and too many merchants are
 “ prejudicial to commerce. When commerce has absorbed as much
 “ money as it can employ, more becomes useless; it is not in the
 “ nature of things, that the commerce of any nation should keep con-
 “ stantly augmenting, and that it should absorb larger and larger sums
 “ of money, in a perpetual gradation. Where then could these
 “ millions, which make a great part of the riches of the nation, exist?
 “ They must, of necessity, exist in foreign countries. This would be
 “ dangerous, if it were possible.

“ BUT suppose we could add these one hundred and thirty millions
 “ (which exist only by the funding system) to the actual specie; the
 “ state would suffer a repletion of specie, which would overturn its
 “ œconomy: for this money, if it were possible it should exist, would
 “ not remain in the Exchequer, it would be scattered all over the
 “ kingdom; it would then entirely lose its quality; commodities of
 “ every kind would be enhanced to more than three times their
 “ intrinsic worth; and every proportion of commerce would be
 “ destroyed.”

OUR countryman, Sir James Stuart, throws the same light upon
 this part of the subject, in his excellent work: he points out the
 consequences of refunding to the creditors the immense capitals which
 form the national debt; he supposes a treasure brought from India to
 discharge it; and then incontestably proves, “ that circulation would

* Sir Thomas More, in his *Utopia*, and Lord Chancellor Bacon, in his *Life of Henry the Seventh*, assert, that it is pernicious to convert arable land into pasturage: yet this is our daily practice; therefore, population must decrease, and our lands cannot be improved.

“ be so glutted and stagnated with money, that interest would fall to
 “ nothing:” in another place, he gives an instance of the effect of
 money regorging in the hands of private individuals, grown rich by the
 last war. “ The peace was made in 1763; between that period and
 “ 1766, many of our countrymen had placed money in the French
 “ actions; till such rash adventurers were checked by the operations of
 “ the French ministry, in reducing both capital and interest upon them,
 “ contrary to the original stipulations with the creditors. This fortunate
 “ circumstance, not only prevented our own subjects from vesting
 “ more property in the French funds, but it brought back part of the
 “ sums she had expended on the continent during the war, and engaged
 “ numbers of foreigners to purchase into our funds.”

HAD it not been for this event, the interest of money must have
 fallen to three *per cent*: as it was, stocks rose; and government found
 new employment for this increase of specie in 1766, by a loan of
 1,500,000*£*. to discharge unfunded debts; and by the sale of vast
 tracts of land in the new acquired settlements; the ceded islands in the
 West-Indies. Nothing more is wanting to prove that, after every
 war, money will flow in beyond the demands for it in trade; beyond
 what is required for common use; and that, if new means are not
 found to engage it in a profitable circulation, it will become useless, if
 not pernicious: it will be useless if it is unemployed; it will be
 pernicious if, by being dispersed and dissipated all over the kingdom,
 it raises any necessary of life to an exorbitant price, so that those who
 have little or no property, the lower classes of the people, cannot
 possibly subsist their families.

ONE would imagine no other refutation could be necessary for all
 projectors, who harraßs us with schemes for paying off the national
 debt: yet we must resume this point, under a separate head, in order
 to prove, beyond a doubt, the absurdity of such projects.

BUT to return to our author---“ The enormous sum which composes
 “ the national debt, never existed altogether; the magic of credit and
 “ of circulation has produced this mass of riches successively with the
 “ same

“ same specie *. The portion which really exists in specie, is sufficient
 “ to give to each branch of the public funds, by turns, its intrinsic
 “ value, without exceeding the bounds of an easy and useful circulation.
 “ The public funds are the magnets of money: what I advance is
 “ literally true; for the possessors of the old funds, when they engaged
 “ to supply the government with new loans, not only raised money
 “ within the kingdom by selling out consolidated annuities, but by
 “ mortgaging these annuities to foreigners; by which means they were
 “ enabled to draw for larger sums than it would have been possible for
 “ them to have obtained on private credit; and thus, at critical times,
 “ to serve their purpose, they swept away almost all the unemployed
 “ money of Europe, keeping it till circulation had time to recover
 “ itself, and the new loans to be distributed into divers hands.

“ THE whole world has been surprised, and even astonished, to see
 “ such sums as twelve millions borrowed for several years conse-
 “ cutively; these loans were made (solely) with the aid of the old
 “ funds, under the auspices of credit and circulation. Behold the
 “ solution of this great problem, or finance phenomenon!”

WILL it not be amazing indeed, if, after having read what this
 ingenious author has asserted, who, from his situation and connections,
 must have been well acquainted with the money negotiations of our
 government agents in Holland; and the account I shall likewise
 give of the advantages of this mode of borrowing the money of
 foreigners to carry on our wars, and to extend our commerce; men
 should be so ignorant, or so prejudiced, as to look upon the national
 debt to be a destructive evil; which more than counterbalances all our
 signal successes by sea and land, during the last war, and all our com-
 mercial profits derived from the same source?

It is beyond a doubt that, in proportion as the exigencies of the

* Our author carries this idea rather too far, though he is perfectly right in his hypothesis,
 upon the whole. He forgets the new sums brought into the kingdom in specie from Spain;
 the returns from India, both by the Company and private individuals, who made immense
 fortunes in that part of the world; the amount of the sale of prizes; and several other
 acquisitions during the war, converted into specie, which served to furnish the sums for
 new loans.

state required large supplies and new loans, its internal, as well as its foreign expences, must have been multiplied: hence an increased demand for the produce of almost every art and manufacture in the kingdom; and the money of foreigners, as well as natives, attracted by the magnetic virtue of public credit, must have been freely circulated, to answer these extra demands. The progress of industry and labour thus invigorated and quickened, we may well suppose, that the returns in many trades, connected with the war, were more than doubled; consequently, likewise the profits. If to these be added, the advantages of commissions from foreign princes with whom we were in alliance; the increased exports to our settlements abroad, and to our fleets and armies, during the war; and the purchase of lands in the ceded islands; it will require no minute calculations to prove that, upon an average, the trading subjects of this kingdom, from the farmer to the merchant, made upwards of ten *per cent. per annum*, of the money borrowed from foreigners and natives, by government, at little more than four *per cent*: here then arises a profit of near six *per cent.* to enable the people to bear the burden of an increase of taxes, and to give them a fresh contributive faculty to subscribe to new loans. But, if I am rightly informed, by persons conversant in mercantile affairs, the profits in most branches of the arts and manufactures (the demands for which were triple during the war) cannot be estimated at less than twelve *per cent*; and as to the disposal of the money beginning to regorge since the peace, some part has been laid out to an advantage of not less than twenty-five *per cent.* in the islands of Grenada, Dominica, St. Vincent, and Tobago. It is needless to use further arguments in favour of a system which has supported us so advantageously, and given us such power and influence, as a body politic, among the nations of the earth, upwards of half a century.

THE panic with which France was struck, when, towards the close of a successful, but very expensive war, she saw the British ministry raise twelve millions (nay, in fact, sixteen; for four millions were granted in 1761, by Exchequer bills, and the aid of the sinking fund) at the very time when she had totally lost her credit, hastened the peace;

peace; which if it was not as advantageous as might be expected, was at least such as we could not have hoped for, if the enemy had not dreaded our resources, and been sensible of the exhausted state of their own finances. In this sense, therefore, I am of opinion, that the national debt, instead of subjecting us to apprehensions from foreign states in times of peace or war, if we shew a proper spirit, and act in concert with a good government for the common interest, must be a check and controul upon foreign courts in both situations. I have the same sentiments as to the happy effects of having foreigners interested in our public funds: it certainly gives us a strong tie upon them; it helps to diminish the prejudices they generally entertain against us; it engages them, by motives of interest, to wish well to, and in some degree to support, our public credit; and if they think proper to settle amongst us, I see no occasion for granting them any extraordinary privileges; those that are common to other subjects, independent of legal incapacities, they do and ought to enjoy; and if they reside here, they increase home consumption, and throw the interest of their property in the funds into the general circulation of the kingdom. Nor are they so likely, either at home or abroad, to conspire against the prosperity of Great Britain; because any revolution, or fatal reverse in the circumstances of the kingdom, must affect them personally, by diminishing the intrinsic value of their nominal capitals in our funds.

WITH respect to those weak monarchs, CHARLES I. and JAMES II. I humbly apprehend, a large national debt would have reversed their fate; for their ministers, servants and dependants, would have been too deeply interested in the funds, and in the places and pensions arising out of the management of the revenues, to have engaged in their despotic schemes. The prerogative of the crown may be stretched, and some acts of partial severity be exercised, by temporary administrations, under the best of princes: but the very troop of placemen, the band of commissioners and of pensioners, with all their agents, deputies and secretaries, cannot, for their own interest, go beyond certain bounds in their servility to ministers of state; and though the number of these is a real grievance, and will be considered as such in discussing the nature

and propriety of our taxes, I cannot but look upon them as a check upon any plan of actual despotism, which might produce an effective change in our constitution.

As a solution of this problem, let it be remembered, that the subsistence of these people depends on the funding system; and that this system can only be supported by the stability of public credit, which ultimately depends on the constitution of the state: change this but in one material instance; nay, without wounding its vitals, make but one advance to it, which I will point out, and the whole herd of placemen belonging to the revenue-department would be converted to staunch patriots. Suppose the king to suspend the sitting of parliament for three years; the annual grants of the land and malt-tax being thereby suspended, no further step could be wanting to shake the fabric of public credit to its center. The creditors of the public, both foreign and domestic, justly alarmed for the payment of the interests of their funds, and deprived of the sanction which the annual session of parliament gives to public credit, would withdraw their property from the funds as fast as possible; their intrinsic value would not be equal to two thirds of the nominal capitals; and every placeman and pensioner in the kingdom would clamour for the sitting of the parliament; dreading the suspension of his salary, or the annihilation of his office. Yet before there was a national debt, it was no uncommon thing for the parliament not to meet annually: and in times of peace, provided there were no laws to amend, strengthen or preserve, nor any grievances to redress, the consequences might not be very great; but in the present situation of our finances, such a step must be considered as having a tendency to despotism; and, like all others of a similar nature that can be supposed, would affect placemen and pensioners as much or more, in proportion to their dependency, than any other persons in the kingdom.

THAT the weight of the national debt checks the exertion of the spirit of liberty in this kingdom, I readily believe; but I am clearly convinced that this is atoned for, by the greater restraints laid on any tendency to despotism on the part of the crown. To review the turbulent scenes that have been lately exhibited in the metropolis, the seat of government;

government; and the hasty, imprudent measures of administration, in support of ill-concerted measures, would be to enter into a field of domestic politics already too much beaten: but surely we may venture, without giving offence, to assert, that there was no want of the exertion of savage liberty; of a liberty which laid restraints on the inclinations and conduct of independent persons, and compelled them to acts, trifling indeed in themselves, but which the supreme magistrate could not have enforced, by his sole authority.

I SHALL now close the defence of the funding system, so far as it regards the principal, or the nominal capitals, vulgarly called the national debt, with one remark more, from the treatise on Circulation, which appears to me to be very conclusive, and to demonstrate, beyond contradiction, the expediency of the establishment of public credit, and the creation of funds, in England

“ THE precious metals are so greatly increased since the discovery of
“ America, that they are debased in quality of signs *. Industry has
“ found employment from all quarters of the globe. The external
“ luxury of America has indemnified the commercial nations of Europe
“ for their own internal luxury, become excessive: this has raised the
“ price of labour by two means; at first, by lessening the value of
“ money, and afterwards by the quantity of manufactures exported to
“ America: this eccentric commerce has, at the same time, caused
“ the enhanced price of works of art. So many hands employed to
“ provide for the new wants and luxury of the Americans, the elements
“ of politics, as well as those of commerce, became, by this means,
“ more complicated and extensive; and the springs of both, stronger
“ and more numerous. It was absolutely necessary to multiply the
“ circulation of paper by credit. This was done at first, as one may
“ say, by instinct; but with fear and trembling, and with very little
“ knowledge of the principles or motives on which the measure pro-
“ ceeded. Gold and silver having lost three-fourths of their value,
“ much was required to represent the value of such a variety and

* WE may strengthen our author's reasoning, by taking into the account with respect to England, our India Company's settlements in Asia.

“ quantity

“ quantity of the works of art. All the means of doing it were obliged
 “ to be trebled; and if it had not been for the augmentation of the
 “ signs of value, which form artificial money (or riches) neither
 “ commerce nor luxury could have subsisted.

“ I THEREFORE maintain it, that the facultative power, or the
 “ metallic riches of the English nation, could not possibly suffice for
 “ the objects which the discovery of America has gradually produced;
 “ and that the English government could never have borrowed such
 “ immense sums,” necessary for the security and improvement of her
 commerce, “ without the aid of that circulation, which the creation
 “ of its funds produced. Credit protects credit; circulation favours
 “ circulation; and the public funds and paper support fresh funds and
 “ fresh paper, by furnishing the springs of circulation, and by the
 “ game carried on in the funds *. The national debt is thus become
 “ the aliment of commerce; the support and the remedy of the luxury
 “ that it sometimes engenders: it has enriched the nation, and put it
 “ in a condition to pay its taxes.

“ THE result of these principles is, that the first debts of the nation
 “ have enabled us to continue contracting new debts, in proportion as
 “ the exigencies of the state required this aid. The effect of the power
 “ has become the cause of it. Gold and silver lowered in their quality
 “ of signs, or common mediums of our exchanges with each other,
 “ the price of all commodities is trebled; and when we say that every
 “ thing is dear, we should say, that money is not so precious, the
 “ representatives of the value of all commodities being multiplied by
 “ paper credit; by which means there is a greater abundance of real
 “ and artificial wealth.

“ IT will be said, that a man with three thousand pounds *per annum*,
 “ is not richer than he would have been with one thousand, in former
 “ times. We grant it; but there are in Europe twenty persons who
 “ have three thousand *per annum*, to one who had a thousand, two
 “ centuries past: and this likewise accounts for the enhanced price of
 “ manufactures, and all the necessaries of life.

* THIS argument is fallacious, and is the only object of controversy I shall have with
 this ingenious author.

“LET us conclude then, upon the whole, that nations which have
“a foreign commerce to carry on with different remote countries,
“receive more good than evil from the public debts; the advantages
“greatly overbalancing all the disadvantages, so long as the good
“opinion of the faith of government can be kept up amongst the
“people.”

To strengthen and confirm that good opinion, by answering every possible objection to the system of funding, is the chief design of this work: and one of the means must be to demonstrate, that stock-jobbing is the greatest evil attending it; but an evil, the thorough knowledge of which destroys its force, and becomes its natural remedy.



ON

S T O C K - J O B B I N G,

CONSIDERED AS A

Consequence of Public Credit, and the Funding System.

THE most singular phænomenon that has appeared in the literary world, for many years, is, a writer in support of the infamous and iniquitous practice of stock-jobbing: undoubtedly, the strongest objection to the mode of raising money for the service of the state, on the funding system; and which alone ought to determine government to adopt some other, if any could be pointed out, with less consequent inconveniences, and as great national advantages.

THE author of the treatise on Circulation, has extended his chain of reasoning on this subject to too great a length, and has thereby weakened its force; the last link is defective, and must be repaired, to preserve the gradation and dependance of one part on the other, and the symmetry of the whole.

THAT I may not be charged with any misrepresentation, I shall follow my usual custom, by giving a faithful translation of his own words. The novelty of the subject must be my apology for the length of this quotation, from a work which will not appear entire in English; its chief merit being comprised in less than one third of its volume.

“THE advantages which the government of England has drawn from
“stock-jobbers*, are, without contradiction, immense. If any one
“should ask me, after this declaration, what I think of this business, I
“must freely confess that I would dissuade my children, my neigh-

* The term in the original is *actionists*; no such word is to be found in our very defective French dictionaries: but our author uses it indiscriminately, as synonymous to *agioteurs*; which Boyer renders, *stock-jobbers*.

“bours,

“ bours, and my friends, from meddling with it. It requires a man
 “ thoroughly versed in the profession; one who devotes his time solely
 “ to this object *. When men engage in it, as it often happens, to
 “ mend a fortune, or to make one rapidly, it becomes a more dangerous
 “ game than any other. It accelerates the ruin it is intended to
 “ prevent; for he, whom we think ruined by stock-jobbing, has only
 “ had recourse to it, because he began to be so by other causes; and
 “ he probably might have prevented it, if, instead of making use of
 “ this seducing and dangerous expedient, he had cut to the quick at
 “ first, by a prudent œconomy; by changing his condition; by fur-
 “ mounting the opinion of others; and by reigning over himself.

“ STOCK-JOBGING has several branches; it is a very complicated
 “ object: it may be carried on, with prudence, and a sure profit, by
 “ making a proper use of our funds, almost without running any of
 “ the risks of the game. When speculations in the funds are made
 “ within the sphere of the abilities (of the capital) of the speculator,
 “ not suffering himself to be governed by brokers (or other jobbers)
 “ it is less hazardous than any other game.”

So far respects individuals; in which the pro and con is tolerably
 ballanced: and, upon the whole, I think that, even on the footing
 Mr. Pinto puts it, few rational men will presume so much on their
 own skill in this intricate science, as to engage in it, if they have any
 funds to lose; but if an inclination to adventure, should still haunt
 any person of property, in the shape of his evil genius, the perusal of
 my little manual referred to in the note, will effectually lay the
 spirit.

If few people of property, arrived at the full maturity of under-
 standing, embark on this perilous bottom (and I believe the number
 lessens every day) then great part of the following arguments, in favour
 of this practice, as it regards the government, fall to the ground.

“ STOCK-JOBBERS draw all the money out of chests, and make it
 “ circulate for the service of government, when any new loans are on
 “ foot. The facility of selling these funds, for time, and of giving

* See Every Man his own Broker, seventh edition, p. 64.

“ and receiving premiums (differences) on them, in the first place,
 “ induces many people to purchase them, who would not, if it were
 “ not for these advantages.

“ SECONDLY, There are a great number of monied people in
 “ England and in Holland, who never definitively vest their money in
 “ the new loans, that they may not run any risks by them in time of
 “ war. But what do they do? They place ten, fifteen, or twenty
 “ thousand pounds in annuities *, which they sell to the jobbers for a
 “ time; by which means they make great interest of their money,
 “ without being subject to the variations of the funds, which are for
 “ account of the brokers, or jobbers. These transactions are continued
 “ for years, and for millions: it is by favour of this practice that the
 “ government of England has been enabled to borrow repeatedly such
 “ large sums, which, independant of jobbing, and the ingenious
 “ means that stock-jobbers make use of, would have been absolutely
 “ impossible; so that the government of England has, by this game,
 “ swept away not only the money of those who wanted to place it
 “ definitively in their funds, but of those likewise who did not want
 “ to be concerned in these funds. I believe this is a secret they were
 “ not acquainted with; and I am happy to have revealed it.”

I CANNOT conceive that our administrations were ever ignorant of
 all the possible transactions of the alley: this, on which Mr. Pinto lays
 so much stress, is certainly not so advantageous to government as he
 imagines; for if higher interest is made by this method, than the
 government gives to the public in general, either for the old funds or
 the new loans, it is a manifest disadvantage; and the more so, if this
 high interest or profit goes out of the kingdom to foreigners. Indeed,
 there is no such thing as calculating what government may pay for the
 sums it is enabled to borrow by this game; it may be six, or eight, or

* IT is not very clear whether Mr. Pinto means in the old funds, or the new loans;
 but, from his former reasoning, I should conclude he means the old, which are generally
 very low before and while new loans are circulating; besides, this is conformable to his
 principle: “ That the old funds contribute to the creation of the new.” His argument,
 however, is exactly the same, understand it which way we will.

ten *per cent.* But it requires some explanation to inform our readers how this sure gain is made; our author not being very clear in this point.

BOTH the old funds, and the circulating subscription for new loans, generally sell at a better price for time, than for ready money; it therefore most frequently happens, that when the payments are making upon a new subscription, the old funds (but I will confine myself to the three *per cent.* consolidated annuities, being the larger mass) are very low indeed; and then it is that our Dutch friends step in and purchase, some ten, some fifteen, and others twenty thousand pounds in these annuities, which most probably will rise, after the demand for ready money is over; they therefore sell them for a distant period, most commonly three months from the time of purchasing; or for the following rescounters. It is highly probable that, by this method, they may get a premium or difference of three *per cent.*; which, for the loan of money to government, or to her subjects, to enable them to make their payments to the new loans, is at the rate of twelve *per cent. per annum.* A very pretty way indeed of enabling the managers of the English finances to pay off national debts! an admonition thundered in their ears from all quarters! Still there rests a difficulty as to the certainty of this alluring gain; and it is so tempting, that many of my countrymen will expect I should remove it; but this I confess is beyond the line of my capacity: for it cannot well be supposed, that the brokers for the Dutch are so expert as to buy in for money, and sell for time, to the same amount, in one and the same hour; but admitting they were, it sometimes happens that an unfavourable variation occurs in less than that time; the price for time, at Jonathan's, after the books are closed, may be lower than it was for ready money at the Bank, just before the last transfer hour expired. In this case, the latter transaction could not take place, and the Dutch agents must wait a favourable opportunity; but it is possible, from circumstances during the war, that they might continue falling, and not recover, for many months, perhaps for a whole year, the price given at the books. What then becomes of the certainty of this scheme; nearly as visionary and delusive

as any of the jobbing kind! One would be apt to think our author writes from the experience of himself and his friends, who might have hit the lucky moments for buying and selling during the last war; when nothing but the frequent necessities of government lowered the price; and when our signal, repeated successes, gave frequent opportunities to sell at a considerable advantage. But reverse the case; and suppose a chain of unfortunate events in war, and the fallacy of the scheme is apparent. As to leaving the risk of the variations to their brokers, or jobbers, I own I do not understand it; and I intreat the author, or his friends in England, to set me and the public right, if in any instance I have unwittingly misunderstood him.

I ADMIT the postulatam, that these transactions assist the government in their new loans; but I deny that they do it advantageously: and I assert, that it is possible for an able minister, at the head of the Treasury, to borrow twelve millions yearly, if necessity requires it, of both natives and foreigners, in time of war, without any such medium, or any other branch of stock-jobbing. This I will prove, under the next general head.

ANOTHER aid to the circulation of the new loans, our author says, is the facility of mortgaging them; in other words, of pawning the subscription receipts: this enables those who have subscribed for much larger sums than they can possibly hold, not having capitals equal to their engagements, to hold the receipts for large nominal sums, during the course of two, three, or more payments of ten or fifteen *per cent*, till an opportunity offers to sell the whole to advantage.

THIS is one of the most powerful motives with many people, perhaps with the majority, to take a part in the new loans; and is the reason why the subscription, even before it comes to the market, generally bears a premium: the second purchasers are willing to allow the original subscribers a small profit, in hopes of a greater; and some of those subscribers, having got their names upon the list for sums which they are not able to answer, are as glad to dispose of them for the first profit that offers. If the second or third purchasers in the course of circulation at market, are holders of the subscription receipts at the
time.

time of a payment, and have not money in hand, the bankers and opulent merchants lend the sum requisite, make the payment, and keep the receipts as a deposit. The interest paid for the advance of a certain proportional sum, is amply compensated, by the turn of the scale, in favour of the whole nominal capital. A receipt for 1000*£*. in annuities, is held for 150*£*. the first deposit: the second payment (about one month, or five weeks after) is generally ten *per cent*. We will suppose this borrowed of a banker, till within a day or two of the third payment: the interest for forty days, at five *per cent*. is but 10*s*. 11*d*. $\frac{1}{2}$: let us now admit that the loan rises at market, at the time given, only one *per cent*; a premium, or difference is received, by selling the whole, of 10*£*. from which deduct the interest you have paid for the loan of 150*£*. to make the second payment, and the remainder will be 9*l*. 9*s*. 0*d*. $\frac{1}{2}$: a very pretty advantage made of the use of 150*£*. for three months! A greater facility cannot be given to government, than the allurements of such profits: but government is by no means indebted to stock-jobbing for this aid, as Mr. Pinto asserts; it is the natural effect of the admirable mode of raising the supplies*: and nothing but the intervention of the cunning devices of the stock-jobbers, equally pernicious to government, and to the people concerned in the funds, could bring into discredit, and render hazardous, a transaction, founded on the fair principles of commerce and exchange. To deposit a proper security for the loan of money, to answer an emergency, whether it be in merchandise or paper, is an equitable, expedient custom; and to take legal interest for the advance of monies upon such securities, is fair and honourable. It is likewise every man's business to gain as much as he can, honestly, by the purchase he makes, whether it be of a horse, or of a subscription receipt. But if the possessor of either takes illegal methods to raise their value, or if the person who lends money on either, and receives them into custody as a deposit till they

* For an account of the methods of raising the annual supplies, granted by parliament, for defraying the public expences of the state, in time of war, and of buying and selling the subscription receipts for annuities, see Every Man his own Broker, seventh edition, chap. iv.

are redeemed, makes use of the basest stratagems to diminish their value, or to terrify or distress the owner into the absolute disposal of them, considerably beneath their real worth, such wretches ought to be considered as the pests of human society; and in this light I consider all stock-jobbers: for every mean artifice, every scandalous forgery of false reports, however detrimental to their country and to their fellow-subjects, is practised, to raise and to fall the price of the public funds. Mr. Pinto acknowledges this melancholy truth; but confines the inexhaustible manufactories of false news to London; when, it is well known that two thirds of this vile fabrication is imported from Holland, by every mail, in time of war: he confesses, that this is a most injurious practice, tending to the destruction of public credit and the ruin of individuals; and there are means, he says, to prevent it, but he reserves it to himself to declare them at a convenient time and place; yet he still insists that this branch of jobbing has facilitated circulation; and that, without it, the English government must have miscarried in its enterprizes during the last war. His arguments on this subject are singular, specious, and worthy our notice, if it were only for their novelty.

“ IF, for want of the aid of stock-jobbing, the power of England to
 “ borrow had mounted only to two thirds of what she actually raised,
 “ (with the assistance of gaming in the alley) she would probably have
 “ lost these two thirds; the advantages the English gained would not
 “ have taken place, and they would have suffered as great losses as they
 “ had signal successes in the last war.

“ WHEN we stand in need of a power equal to ten, and are masters
 “ of only five, the proportion is not as two to one, but frequently
 “ as ten to nothing: for what we employ is totally lost; because feeble
 “ efforts become useless, nay even pernicious, and turn against their
 “ agent. Slowness engenders slowness, and weakness greater weak-
 “ ness. If the English had sent one third less of ships and troops to
 “ conquer the Havannah, they would have failed in the enterprize;
 “ and all the expences of the expedition would not only have been
 “ lost, but this loss would have occasioned several others; and instead
 “ of

“ of the treasures and other advantages which were the fruit of success,
“ every thing would have been reversed. I do not then exaggerate in
“ what I advance concerning the inequality of the proportion.

“ LET us perform all that is requisite, or only two thirds; and the
“ effects, in politics, instead of three to two, are, sometimes, the
“ whole to nothing. It is therefore on a little supplement, that the
“ success of the whole depends; and if stock-jobbing, and the money
“ of foreigners contribute to it, they cannot be too much countenanced
“ and encouraged: and I have already demonstrated, that if it were
“ not for the circulation which gaming in the funds produces, both at
“ home and abroad, the monied men would never dare to take so large
“ a part in the new loans; nor the supplies would not be found with
“ that astonishing, requisite celerity, at the crisis when they are
“ wanted. It is this ready vent which encourages enterprizes and cir-
“ culation; that which gaming procures is prodigious; it cannot be
“ imagined how much it facilitates the means of disposing of one's
“ funds, at every hour, at every instant, and that even of the most
“ considerable sums. It is to this facility which individuals have of
“ parting with their funds, that England is partly indebted for those
“ numerous loans which procured her such signal successes. The
“ advantage then resulting from stock-jobbers and foreign creditors,
“ greatly surpasses all the inconveniences arising from them. Both
“ have been essential, and of great utility to England; and they have
“ contributed not a little to the success of her military enterprizes.”

THE advantage derived from our foreign creditors has been admitted;
but I can by no means allow that any of the branches of stock-jobbing,
pointed out by our author, have so greatly favoured circulation, that
they have been the supplement, the necessary addition to our national
resources, as he mentions. I am, on the contrary, of opinion, that they
have greatly depreciated the value of our funds; because, it is very
evident, that the money of jobbers was only placed in them *pro tempore*,
to extract the essence of profit; that this essence, and a great part of
the substance being drawn off after the war (when its remaining mixed
with the main body no longer answered the venal purpose of the jobbers)
weakened

weakened the residuary mass: no other reason can be given why our funds have not risen since the peace, at least fifteen *per cent*; for if our credit stood the test of the uncertain issues of war, when that of France was totally ruined, and if we then swept away all the unemployed money in Europe, might we not reasonably expect to engross it at present, when our national credit is firmly established, on a solid, permanent basis; and when no other power can offer such interest, with equal security, for the large fortunes that have been amassed in Holland and England? We might indeed! and our three *per cent* annuities, by the concurrence of purchasers, would rise considerably above par, if it were not for stock-jobbing---the bane of private---the polluter of public credit! which sounds the alarm to distant regions; and, from the report of its fatal effects getting abroad, calls in question the wisdom of the British government, in the administration of its finances, and the stability of the plan on which public credit is built.

BUT to demonstrate the enormity of the evils of stock-jobbing, so as to convince all unprejudiced minds, that no real or pretended advantages derived from it, can possibly compensate for its ruinous effects, I must lay open a branch of this accursed traffic, with which Mr. Pinto is either totally unacquainted, or on which he chose to be silent, because it makes his side of the scales kick against the beam.

HE should have known, that some hundreds of people, both natives and foreigners, residing in London, deal largely in the old funds, and in the new loans, without having ever had one penny of property vested in either.

ANOTHER class, whose numbers exceed the former, with very small capitals, which serve as a bait to procure them credit, game for millions in a few years. With the former set, the proportion is as nothing to all: with the latter, it is frequently as one to ten thousand.

HE who values not his neck, because he is conscious it is worth nothing, may take the boldest leap. But he who has an enterprising spirit, with one foot in the stirrup, will not be far behind him. It is therefore difficult to determine which does the most mischief of the two classes. This however is certain; that the honest, cautious, well meaning

meaning man, who brings a moderate fortune into the alley, and stakes it at this game, in order to augment it, and make himself easy in his circumstances, has the odds against him, in the proportion of nine to one, of being stripped of it, by one or other of these *Chevaliers d'Industrie*, Knights of the Alley.

THESE are the jobbers who enable our Dutch, and other foreign friends, "to make such large interest for a temporary deposit of their money in our funds;" and these are they, some of whom ruin themselves and their fellow-subjects; while others make their fortunes at the expence, and then laugh at the credulity, of their neighbours, having hearts of adamant, insensible to the calamities they have occasioned; and ears deaf to the cries of pining want, and to the petitions of those whom they have ruined "by their ingenious devices."

THANKS to the unerring, retributive spirit of the Governor of the Universe, no species of successful villainy whatever, passes through life unbranded! Conscience operates like a sudorific medicine; it propels the black humours to the surface!--

VIEW these wretches at their superb villas, in the environs of the metropolis: dead to all the refined enjoyments riches should procure, (of which the noblest is the relief of indigent merit) you will find fullness, reserve, suspicion, and an air of contempt for all, who have not been so fortunate as themselves, strongly marked upon their features. A table bending beneath the weight of costly and exotic provisions, a massy side-board, and an aggregate fund of wines, seems to be their chief delights. With a vacuum in their minds, which all the variegated beauties of nature and art cannot supply, they are lost in the midst of her most enchanting scenes. A flower plucked from the gay parterre, may gratify the animal sense of smelling; the eye, long accustomed to pore over paper-money and figures, may find relief in glancing over the well-planned shrubbery, or the wide, extended lawns; but, having no invention, no harmony within themselves, and incapable of relishing the fine imagery of the poet, the natural philosopher, or the moralist, the external senses are soon palled with satiety, and nothing but the interesting bustle of the old rendezvous can fill up the measure

of their time. Thus we see them weekly hovering round the alley, like the feeble blaze of an expiring taper; yet, though exalted into their carriages, they watch with a timid, circumspect eye, to avoid the regards of those, who know the base means by which they have acquired them, or, who have been the victims of their fraud and cunning; for the open, chearful, steady countenances of honest men, speak daggers to their souls.

It must not be denied, that men of high rank and capital fortunes are likewise concerned in stock-jobbing; but these having solid property to lose, do not play such a desperate game as those of the two classes I have just described: they ought, however, to be equally stigmatized, if they make use of illicit means, to get possession of the property of others.

ENORMOUS as the amount of what is called our national debt, may appear to Mr. Pinto, I can assure him, that more than that sum is nominally bought and sold in the alley, in the course of a year, by persons who have neither accepted, nor transferred any funds at the transfer offices in the Bank; nor have either borrowed or lent money, on old, or new loans. What benefit can government possibly derive from this extensive branch of jobbing? None, that I can conceive. But the mischiefs are as innumerable as they are aggravating: for the funded property of thousands, by this iniquitous practice, lies at the mercy of a set of men of desperate fortunes, devoid of every principle of honour.

THEY form themselves into secret associations; and as the state of their accounts stand, either raise or sink the value of the personal estates of people of all ranks in the kingdom; and this is very often effected, without any event happening in the posture of public affairs, to give a favourable or unfavourable turn to the price of the funds.

IN times of war indeed, false news from the continents of Europe, or of America, are fertile resources; but in times of peace, they can convince us that they do not want this aid. It is sufficient that a junto of these jobbers act in concert. If they are BULLS, they agree to buy of one another, very capital sums of annuities for time, at an advance
above

above the current price; and then cancel the bargains privately: the favourable turn being thus given, by an artificial demand, the price rises in the market of course, and gives them an opportunity of adjusting their grand account advantageously. If they are BEARS, they sell in the same manner, to each other, for time, under the current price for money; by which method, they lower the funds, from the quantity artificially poured into the market, and then purchase for time, sufficient to settle their accounts, in their favour*.

IN this manner nominal transactions (founded on speculation, and a mere gaming account of profit or loss) which have no other object but that of adjusting differences between jobbers, determines and fixes, for a time, the value of every man's property vested in the funds; and the whole body of proprietors are involuntarily obliged to take their chance in the gambling schemes of the alley; and to make an extraordinary profit, or to suffer an extraordinary loss, by the fluctuations in the price, occasioned by fictitious contracts. To explain more distinctly the bad consequences of this branch of stock-jobbing, give me leave to suppose, that a country gentleman has vested forty thousand pounds in the three *per cent* consolidated bank annuities, with a view to keep his capital in this fund for a number of years, and to draw only the annual interest, except some extraordinary occasion should require him to sell part of the principal. This occasion arises; he is disposed to give his only daughter ten thousand pounds in specie, for a marriage portion: he examines the news-papers over his cup of tea, and finds the price of the three *per cents*, is ninety-one; having bought in nearly on the same terms, he is very well satisfied with having enjoyed a moderate interest for his money, and prepares to sell out eleven thousand pounds of his capital, which, at ninety-one, would produce him the sum required in specie, and within a very trifle, sufficient to pay his broker. But while he is preparing to carry his design into execution, a false rumour, grounded upon a letter fabricated in some great jobber's accompting-house, (in time of war) or some clan-

* To avoid long quotations, I am under a necessity of referring again to Every Man his own Broker, p. 47, 49, for a general definition of BULLS and BEARS.

destine manœuvre of a junto (in time of peace) who happen to be BEARS, cause a fall of three or four *per cent.* in the price of the consolidated annuities. The gentleman now sees himself under a necessity to sell a larger portion of his capital, to supply the deficiency, and to suffer the absolute loss of three or four hundred pounds of his property, (more than one year's interest of his whole capital) if he accomplishes his plan. It is probable, therefore, that he will delay it: this may be attended with domestic inconveniences of another kind, and the views of a family, perhaps their peace of mind, may be blasted by the operations of the alley: but if he persists, and sells at this disadvantage, he will certainly join with me in execrating all stock-jobbers; and in maintaining, that gaming in the funds weakens their credit, and depreciates their value at home and abroad. With respect to foreigners, I have had many opportunities of knowing that the frequent fluctuations of the price deters them from placing their money in them. In the Austrian Netherlands, many individuals have large capitals hoarded in chests, for want of knowing how to employ them securely, on advantageous terms. The nature of the English funds was therefore a common topic of conversation, whenever they had an opportunity of consulting me privately, during my residence at Ostend; and I can, with great truth, assert, that the only objection which prevented my success, at any time, with those whom I wanted to engage in our funds, was, the hazard of great losses upon selling out, in case of a sudden emergency.

It will be expected that I should reverse the situation of things, and counterbalance the risk of loss, by the equal chance of gain; but this would not redress the grievance complained of: for the sober adventurers in the funds, who only vest their fortunes in them, to enjoy reasonable interest, with the security of public, in preference to private credit, do not wish to throw them into the scale of chance; and as to all other adventurers, the large profit to be made occasionally, is only a temptation to the lust of gaming, attended with the most pernicious consequences to the public in general. It allures the tradesman to abandon the ordinary slow operations of inland trade, by the prospect
of

of a fortune to be more rapidly acquired by jobbing; it represents to the merchant greater gains, with seemingly less perils than those which arise from foreign commerce: tempests, privateers, bad markets, failure of distant correspondents, all magnify to his view; and he sees less hazard, with a brighter prospect, in a jobbing account.

THUS, by profitable gaming in the alley, trade and navigation is injured; and by losing accounts, private credit is essentially hurt; as thousands of ruined families can testify to their sorrow.

No further proof can be required of the evils of stock-jobbing; and I apprehend that, instead of supporting Mr. Pinto's opinion, "That it has been a principal means of extending the public credit of Great Britain," the majority of my readers will draw a conclusion, from my arguments, against the funding system itself. But to prevent this bad consequence, I must intreat them to attend to the expedients I shall propose for lessening the effects of stock-jobbing, till it can be totally abolished.

I HAVE said, that half the evil consequences of jobbing are destroyed, by a full discovery of them: it was with this view I published my former treatise; and I shall now add some further advice on the same subject, which I hope will be equally serviceable to all who are interested in the public funds.

IT is too late to waste our time in speculative enquiries, concerning the good or bad policy of naturalizing the system of public credit, now arrived to such perfection in England. Established as it is, and its national utility having been so long experienced, it is become the unquestionable duty and interest of every man of property in the kingdom to support it. He therefore, who undermines it, in the smallest degree, by artifice or fraud of any kind, should be considered as an enemy to the welfare of his country.

LET those jobbers then, who contrive to sink the value of the funded property of the kingdom, by cunning devices, be considered as a banditti of thieves, who live upon the booty they acquire, by plundering those, whose private occasions oblige them to carry their funds to market, of part of their property: and that you may be enabled to form
a just

a just opinion of the fluctuations in the funds, and to discover when these public robbers are at work, I will state the principal causes which alone ought to operate any real diminution of the market price at any given time whatever. If no such causes subsist, be on your guard, and let nothing but extreme necessity induce you to sell; for you may be assured the BEARS are lying in wait, to devour your substance.

I SHALL divide the chief causes which naturally contribute to lower the price of the funds, into two classes: those which happen in times of war; and those which occur in times of peace.

WITH respect to the first, it has already been noticed, that in proportion as the demands of government increase, the interest of money will rise; and individuals, from a prospect of employing their money more advantageously in new loans, will sell out of the old funds, especially those which bear the lowest interest. This will happen as early as possible, because the advantage will be the greater; therefore, speculators will crowd to the market as soon as they have intelligence of a rupture with any considerable foreign power, that they may sell before the fall increases. The difficulty, therefore, will be, to distinguish between rumours of war, and the actual approach of this national calamity: and there can be no surer guide in this case, than an impartial scrutiny into the political situation of our country. The state of its commerce, and of its revenues; the character of its prince, and his ministers, compared with the same circumstances in the nation with whom a war is expected, will, in a great measure, determine what degree of credit we ought to give to reports of an unavoidable rupture.

In the late dispute with Spain, I had the honour to be consulted by several gentlemen of rank and fortune (some of them foreigners) who were not in the channel of court intelligence; and I ventured to assure them, that, considering the political circumstances of the nation, the object of the negotiation was not of consequence sufficient to involve us in a war; and though I readily allowed, that to take off the rudder of a king's ship, was almost as great an indignity as to strike the monarch, or his ambassador, a blow on the face, yet I demonstrated, to their satisfaction, that we were not in a condition to go to war for points of honour,

honour, or solely to gratify national resentment. The same sentiments I repeated publicly in my lectures; and I had the satisfaction to dissuade several of my friends from selling out of the funds upon that occasion.

IF the events of war are unsuccessful, and we lose valuable settlements abroad, the funds will fall, from a concurrence of sellers, many of them merchants, who depended on remittances from the conquered places, and for want of them are obliged to part with their funded property. The apprehension of more misfortunes will likewise engage others in the same measure.

POWERFUL alliances formed against the interest of the kingdom, having a tendency to endanger its political existence as an independant state, will affect the funds: for the public defence must require unusual supplies; which increasing the value of money, by the great demand for it, will lower the price of the old funds.

BUT an actual invasion of a foreign enemy is the most to be dreaded. For the universal panic that such an event would occasion, no adequate remedy can be prescribed; because men will naturally make use of the liberty this free country gives them, and withdraw their persons and property, with the utmost expedition, from the seat of war. The value of the funds, in this case, might sink near fifty *per cent.* in a few days, owing to the vast concourse of sellers; and probably nothing would prevent a total cessation of the market for them, from the want of purchasers, but the patience, fortitude and discernment, of a few opulent individuals, who would take this opportunity to buy, actuated chiefly by the hopes of great gain, and, in some measure, by just reflections on the uncertain issues of war; or the storm might subside, and public tranquility being restored, the funds would recover their full value: besides, as members of the community, we must submit to its fatalities.---If we have patience, some would say, and do not part with our property in the funds, the state of affairs may alter, and we shall not be losers: others might reflect that, at such a crisis, if they had near and dear connections which prevented them from leaving the kingdom, they would be subject to the same inconveniences with cash by them, if not more than if they remained proprietors of the funds;
for

for in the time of the great civil war, men were obliged to bury their money and plate, and they generally passed to other possessors: the families which concealed it, being torn from the place, by the hand of violence; or the person actually depositing it, taken off by death. The history of every country, where foreign conquest, or intestine commotions have produced temporary revolutions, furnishes instances of treasures concealed, lost, and sometimes not discovered for ages after these events.

NOR would the possessors of land be in a better situation than the proprietors of our funds, in case of a revolution from either foreign or domestic causes; it being well known, that landed estates are always bestowed as rewards on the victorious chiefs.

I AM, therefore, clearly of opinion that, even in times of public distress, should every thing seem to threaten a dissolution of government, funded property is the last to be parted with.

I KNOW of no events, in the course of human affairs, besides those already mentioned, which ought to affect the value of the funds in times of war, so as to lower the current price considerably. But several circumstances may contribute to advance it; such as signal successes, the return of great treasures taken from the enemy, and the approach of peace. The two first, however, are only to be considered as adventitious events; a reverse of fortune, or an extra demand for money, may, in a few months, reduce the enhanced value: but the last, is a sufficient cause for a gradual rise, in proportion as the value of money diminishes, from the great demand for it ceasing.

LET me now state the principal circumstances which ought to have any considerable influence on the funds in times of peace; and give me leave to premise, that when the nation enjoys perfect tranquillity, when there is no sudden large demand for money, nor any considerable sums in specie poured into the kingdom, no variation beyond two *per cent.* in the price of the funds ought to take place; if it does, independent of the following causes, be assured it is artificial, and a trick of the alley.

ORDERS from foreigners to vest very considerable sums in the funds, at any stated time.

THE return of great wealth, derived from our Asiatic commerce and territorial jurisdiction; or of immense fortunes acquired by individuals, in the administration of the Company's affairs in India.

A STEADY, judicious, uncorrupt and æconomical administration of the revenues of the kingdom; a general good understanding between every branch of government and the people; with a prospect of the duration of peace, and of such a ministry, so that the value of money must fall daily: these are the chief events which may make the funds rise above five *per cent.* from the concurrence of purchasers, who will find no other channels open for employing their money to equal advantage.

THE funds are equally liable to sink considerably beneath the market price, if any of the following unhappy occurrences disturb the peace and security of the kingdom.

THE dangerous illness, or sudden death, of the reigning prince.

A DISUNION of any of the branches of the three estates of the kingdom.

THE advancement, to the highest offices in the state, of men of weak minds, corrupt hearts, and debauched manners.

A GENERAL mistrust and want of mutual confidence between administration and the public at large; causing mutual complaints and reproaches, and engendering parties and divisions, which tend to tumults, popular insurrections, and civil wars.

A STAGNATION, or considerable failure of private credit; earthquakes, inundations, or fires destroying any part of our commercial settlements, by which our merchants at home may be so distressed for want of remittances, as to be obliged to part with their property in the funds, to supply the deficiencies.

LASTLY, a dearth of provisions, or the plague; both of which would cause considerable migrations of independant people of property.

IF any other contingent public calamities should hereafter occur to the minds of any future proprietors of the funds, let them use their own discretion in applying them: at present all is quiet; I write in a time of profound peace, when no internal malady prevails in the body

politic, but what will admit of an easy remedy; and therefore I shall only lay down one general rule for the conduct of those who are, and of those who may be disposed to become, proprietors in the funds.

WATCH attentively the real value of money; I mean, what interest it will bear on the best landed security in the kingdom: and if you find the funds are rather under the par of the general rate of interest *, let those who have property vested in them, avoid selling out, and those who wish to purchase, lose no time.

MONEY is at present (August 1772) worth four *per cent*: the late blow given to private credit, may indeed have given some individuals an opportunity of employing large sums on better terms; but two millions thrown into the market, would reduce it below four: and I am convinced, that if the peace lasts ten years longer (which I cannot doubt, having private reasons which amount almost to a certainty) it will be under three; and on this view of the face of affairs, I apprehend the funds are now under their real value; and that they must rise to an equation with the rate of interest very soon, if no sinister artifice prevents it; after which, admitting the duration of the peace, they ought not to vary above two *per cent*.

IN a word, I cannot too strongly caution my fellow-citizens against idle rumours of wars; nor too earnestly enforce this observation; "That the jobbing brokers, and their principals, the whole body of jobbers, must live; and their subsistence depends on your false hopes and fears: they must form interested schemes to deceive you, or starve; for the frequent variations in the prices of the funds, are their proper aliment."

It will perhaps be allowed, that I have given proper advice to individuals; but it will be said, that the evil of stock-jobbing remains an insuperable objection to the funding system, so far as it regards the body politic. I readily acknowledge this melancholy truth; declaring, however, that it is in the power of government to apply an adequate

* NEEDY people will always offer premiums in proportion to their distress; therefore, mortgages may be had at five *per cent*. when money is worth only four. But we are to reason upon a supposition of an equal number of lenders and borrowers.

remedy, either by destroying the practice totally, or by laying it under such regulations that it cannot be productive of most of the bad consequences justly ascribed to it. Many expedients have been proposed for this purpose; and it depends on the wisdom of the legislature to adopt the best. In a point of such delicacy, it is impossible to be too cautious; but a time of profound peace, is an opportunity that ought not to be lost, of trying every rational experiment to support the solidity of public credit, and the mode of levying money for the public service by the funding system, independant of the dishonest practices of the alley. A bill for this purpose was in agitation during the last session of parliament; and some of the heads seemed calculated to answer the end proposed, while others appeared to be contradictory and inadequate: in short, it had the common defect of all bills framed by the lawyers; sufficient room was left for evasion, misconstruction and litigation. I was therefore glad to find it postponed.

It is, however, some consolation to find, that we have a minister who dares to face this subject; if he is in earnest, and not so vulgarly prejudiced as to imagine, that all knowledge of revenue affairs is centered within the narrow circle of a few persons in the treasury, in parliament, and in the cabinet, he will invite every ingenious man in the kingdom to assist him; by which means the happy medium between laying such a restraint on the time-transactions in the funds, as would prejudice public credit, and the permission of the present shameful practice of unlimited jobbing, may be discovered: but before this can be attempted, it will be necessary to explode all idle projects for paying off the imaginary national debt; for so long as the ministry, and the public, entertain the idea of a debt of one hundred and twenty-six millions to be paid off, in whole or in part, the gentlemen in the alley will be the real, and the lords of the treasury only the ostensible, managers of the finances of this kingdom.

THIS subject, therefore, demands our attention, and follows next in the order of this treatise.

ON THE
INEXPEDIENCY AND INEFFECTU-
OF

All Projects for paying off the reputed National Debt.

WE have already observed, that from the time of the introduction of the funding system, to this hour, all orders of men have united in a general outcry against the usual ways and means of raising the supplies for the service of the nation. We must now take notice of the effects which a general opposition to this system has produced.

As often as the government has required new loans, the major part of the complainants have very eagerly engaged in them: while, on the other hand, a few ingenious men, remarking that a spirit of discontent prevailed, devised and proposed sundry expedients for furnishing the capital sums wanted in times of war, by schemes that should prove less burthensome to the public, and more advantageous to government. Several plans have likewise been published, for redeeming part, or the whole, of the immense capital of one hundred and twenty-six millions, the reputed national debt.

BUT all these projects, however well intended, have been unsuccessful; and the reason commonly assigned, by the managers of our revenue affairs, has been, that they were either defective, or impracticable; consequently, in both cases, ineffectual. Dissatisfied with this decision, the authors have generally appealed to the public; and I am afraid, the warmth of resentment has sometimes excited them to exaggerate the inconveniences of the funding system, in order to raise the public odium against the minister, who thought proper to reject their favourite plans.

A REVIEW of the progress of the contests respecting the adopted mode of raising the supplies, and an impartial scrutiny of the various

schemes that have been offered to the ministry and to the public, in the course of sixty years, without producing any considerable alteration in it, has, in the end, given rise to new investigations; and other ingenious men have lately discovered, that the evils imputed to the funding system bear no proportion to the benefits derived from it.

It now evidently appears, that we owe all our national glory to the operations of public credit; the erroneous opinions of those who foretold a general bankruptcy, if ever we extended it so far as to borrow one hundred millions, experience has exploded; and scarce a man is to be found at present, who does not see the political necessity of strengthening and supporting the system of public credit, instead of studying means to destroy it; which was formerly recommended, from a groundless apprehension, that, otherwise, it would destroy the nation.

SIR JAMES STUART has very fairly stated, in the most concise manner, the conditions on which all the creditors of the public, as well natives as foreigners, have lent their money to government. "The principal is not demandable; the only absolute obligation on the part of the state is, the punctual regular payment of the annuity, commonly called the interest."

THE simplest propositions are the most liable to be overlooked, because they are not thought worthy our notice: thus it has happened in the present case; mens minds have been so agitated by their fears and apprehensions about the principal, as soon as the nation had incurred, what they called, a debt of fifty millions, that, from the year 1715, to the present time, they have been wholly taken up with schemes for paying off this national debt, as the only means of insuring the reimbursement of their capitals. This has prevented their attention to the following self-evident truths.

THE public creditors of the state have no right to expect from it, the reimbursement of their capitals.

THE due performance of the only obligatory part of the contract---the punctual payment of the annuities or interest---operates the same effects, as paying off the principals; by establishing a public, open, free

free market, where the value, in money, of every capital share in the funds, is readily and almost daily to be obtained*.

THIS clear light thrown on a subject, which had been obscured and rendered extremely intricate by speculative projects, together with a full conviction that public credit is established on a solid, permanent basis, in this kingdom, have led me to still bolder propositions; for the fate of which I own myself not a little uneasy. All that I can plead in my defence, in case they are found to be erroneous, is, that zeal in the service of my country may have carried me too far, and have induced me, though with a benevolent intention, to advance tenets whose truth and importance affected my mind so forcibly, that I could not resist the impulse of communicating them, even at the risk of adding to the number of neglected projectors.

I VENTURE then to assert, that it is a vulgar error to stile the capitals composing the funds, called annuities†, THE NATIONAL DEBT. They are only yearly rents, which must be regularly paid, unless the capitals are reimbursed: these yearly rents, therefore, are the national debt; and we have, properly speaking, no other.

THE end proposed by all schemes for paying off the capitals which entitle the public creditors to annuities, is, to exonerate the subjects of the state of the taxes imposed on them to pay these annuities.

IF they will not accomplish this, to any considerable degree, in so long a space of time as twenty, thirty, or fifty years, they are certainly inexpedient, and do not merit the attention of government.

INDEPENDANT of the consideration of easing the people of the burthen of those taxes which are said to affect the necessaries of life,

* IT may be objected, that the funds which compose the greatest part of the reputed national debt, are considerably under par; and therefore the capitals will not be reimbursed by selling out. But I desire it may be considered, that the first subscribers had douceurs, on which they made a profit, that produced more than an equivalent to them for every hundred pounds advanced to government; and all repurchasers of the annuities have bought them (independant of these douceurs) so much under par, that the chance is as three to two in their favour, that they will rather gain than lose, by selling at the public market.

† THE word annuity means a yearly rent to be paid for a term of life, or years; or a yearly allowance. See *Johnson's Dictionary*.

and to prejudice trade in general, the government has no business to pay off any part of the capitals for which they have granted annuities.

It is a most impolitic, injudicious misapplication of the surplusses of the permanent revenues of the kingdom, to employ them in paying off capitals, unless the taxes which were imposed and appropriated to the payment of the annual interests of such capitals are abolished at the same time.

As we have seen that the taxes are made perpetual, which were imposed for the payment of those annuities government has thought proper to extinguish since the peace, by paying off the capitals, I must insist on it, that such finance operations proceed on erroneous principles, are highly detrimental to the public, and by no means advantageous either to the government, or its creditors.

PUBLIC CREDIT receives no additional strength from these alienations of the surplusses of the revenue. It is now clearly understood, even in foreign countries, particularly in France, that the immense capital of one hundred and twenty-six millions, vulgarly called the NATIONAL DEBT, is not demandable. Mr. Pinto declares, that at Paris they looked upon the English nation to be on the eve of bankruptcy, notwithstanding all our successes in the war; that they expected this event every day; and that they considered us as having exhausted all our resources; till he convinced them, that the phantom of the national debt was illusory; by demonstrating, that the capitals are not demandable, consequently, that our government can never be embarrassed on this subject, as foreigners had erroneously imagined *.

ON this principle, I affirm, that the surplusses of the public revenues, may be employed to much better account than they are at present; or have been, in any given time of peace, since the supposed national debt existed.---I likewise consider an inviolable punctuality in the payment of the yearly rents on the capitals composing the public funds, as the rock of public credit.

WHILE this continues, I am well assured, public credit is so firmly established, that it answers all the purposes of refunding the capitals,

* *Traité de la Circulation*, p. 41.

except

except that of abolishing those taxes which are generally reputed to be the most oppressive.

THESE are the general positions which engage me to recommend to the managers of our revenue transactions, a finance principle of the ancients:

To amass treasures in times of peace, as a provision for the exigencies of war:---and I hope to make it appear, that, considering the impracticability of extinguishing our present taxes, such an application of the annual surplusses of the public revenues, as will, at all events, prevent any additional taxes being levied (though we should borrow one hundred millions more, on the usual plan) is the best that can be adopted.

BUT before I proceed to a final explanation of this my new project, it will be necessary for me to illustrate, and to prove the truth (to the best of my knowledge) of the former propositions.

I WILL take them in the order they stand; and endeavour to be as concise as the nature of such delicate subjects will admit.

IF any thing more is wanting to support the first, I imagine the following familiar examples will supply the defect.

A LENDS to B, the sum of 1000*£*, at three *per cent*, interest, on a common bond: the well known condition of which is, that if B, or his assigns, shall pay or cause to be paid to A, or his assigns, the said principal sum of 1000*£*, with the interest due thereon, within the limited time stipulated, then the obligation is to be void, or otherwise to remain in full force.

BUT C advances (for I will not call it lending, when a man has no power to demand restitution) to D, the sum of 1000*£*, on a special contract; the condition of which is, that D, or his assigns, shall pay or cause to be paid to C, or his assigns, the sum of thirty pounds *per annum* (being an annuity of three *per cent*.) by regular, equal, half yearly payments, for ever; unless the said D, or his assigns, shall *think proper* to refund the principal sum of 1000*£*, to C, or his assigns, when the obligation will be void; otherwise it will remain in full force.

Is

Is it not evident, in this case, that the only debt which can be claimed or demanded of D or his assigns, or which solely constitutes the obligation, is the yearly rent, or annuity, of thirty pounds? The optionary alternative of redeeming the annuity, by restoring the capital, does not convey the least idea of a debt or legal obligation. Refunding the principal is, in fact, the same as a new purchase; for it would be a matter of equal indifference to D, or his assigns, whether they paid back 1000*l.* to C, or his assigns, or gave it to an utter stranger, on condition that he should exonerate them of the annuity, and continue to pay it to C, or his assigns.

IN the very same light, I consider government and its creditors: it is apparent likewise, that if D is known to be worth only three hundred pounds, at any one time during the existence of this contract, C has no right to complain, or to publish declarations of his approaching bankruptcy, if he continues to pay the yearly rent punctually, by half yearly payments; nor has he any other legal demand upon him whatever. The produce of his ingenuity, or of his industry, may enable him to pay the annuity; and as to the principal, it matters not whether he is in a condition to refund the whole, or only three hundred pounds. This should be no object with C, especially if he has a collateral security, to provide against any deficiency in the payments of the annuity. This collateral security is given to the public creditors of the state, in the sinking fund; the unappropriated produce of which is made responsible for any deficiencies in those taxes (derived from the ingenuity or industry of the people) which are appropriated for the payment of the annuities on the capital of one hundred and twenty-six millions, falsely called the NATIONAL DEBT.

THUS I prove that we have, in reality, no other NATIONAL DEBTS but the yearly rents, payable on those LOANS, which are very properly stiled, in the acts of parliament constituting them; at the Bank; in our public accounts; and upon all occasions when we mention them, ANNUITIES. Had there been a positive obligation to refund the capitals, they must have taken another title: we must have called them, from their creation, so many millions of outstanding debts, at three or four *per cent.* interest; and not consolidated annuities.

ON this ground I also refute all that has been written by Mr. Hume and others, including the last great calculator DR. PRICE, on the subject of a national bankruptcy; as I think it has been clearly demonstrated, that the state can never approach to this melancholy situation, on account of the capitals of its funds: and as to the annuities or yearly rents, if we were under an indispensable necessity to find new resources, to the amount of ten additional millions yearly---let me boldly proclaim, to the united governments of FRANCE and SPAIN (the only formidable powers whose secret machinations we have to dread) that, were we put to this hard test, we can raise them, without destroying public credit. But I would not be misunderstood, or excite the popular cry against me: I must therefore declare, that nothing but the preservation of the body politic, as an independant state amongst the nations of the earth, should justify us in exerting our utmost strength.

My second, third and fourth propositions, are so intimately connected with and dependant on each other, that they cannot well be separated; I shall therefore take the liberty to illustrate them collectively.

THE shortest history I could possibly give of the proposals that have been made for paying off, or putting in a course of payment, the funds, erroneously stiled the NATIONAL DEBT, would require a separate volume; because the explanation of them depends on arithmetical calculations, and numerical tables. I shall therefore only select four, which have appeared at different periods; all the rest being of inferior merit, though proceeding on the same principles, and having the same ends in view. If these are found to be inadequate to their design, I apprehend, the truth of the propositions we have now under consideration, will be confirmed beyond a doubt; and then I shall be at liberty to introduce the important consequences I mean to deduce from them.

THE FIRST, and the only scheme for refunding the capitals of the national loans, carried into practice, was the establishment of the SINKING FUND, A. D. 1716. Of the nature of this fund, and of the alienations which diverted it from the original design of its institution, I have given a cursory account in my former treatise*; and my reason

* Every Man his own Broker.

for not enlarging upon it, I have therein declared to be, " That it did
" not appear to me to be a subject of much importance to the public,
" in general, whose principal concern is, that the payment of the interest
" of the money borrowed of them is regular, and at the same time well
" secured; and of this, I said, no Englishman could have any doubt."
The additional knowledge I have since acquired, from the works of
others, and my own observations on the stability of public credit, induces
me to believe, that all sensible foreigners are of the same opinion. But
as the SINKING FUND is made the basis of the last proposal that has
been offered to the public, and a different application of its surplusses
is the essence of my own, it seems necessary to give a more concise
illustration of the nature and powers of this fund; and as I cannot do
this in a better manner than it is already stated by DR. PRICE, I hope I
shall stand justified to that worthy gentleman, and to all my readers, for
the quotation I am now to introduce from his " Appeal to the Public,
" on the Subject of the National Debt;" especially when they are
apprised, that the fourth scheme for paying off this supposed debt,
belongs to the same ingenious author; the discussion of which would
have obliged me to insert it hereafter: besides, the account the Doctor
gives, shews the inefficacy of the SINKING FUND, as it has been
managed, to answer the design of its institution; and, with respect to
the first scheme, corroborates my propositions.

" BEFORE the establishment of this fund, there had existed many
" smaller funds, of the same nature: that is, such duties or taxes had
" been provided, for paying the interests of particular loans, as afforded
" surplusses by which the principal itself was to be gradually redeemed.
" This seems to have been the common practice in the reigns of KING
" WILLIAM and QUEEN ANN. Most of the public duties were given
" for terms of years; and at the end of those terms they ceased of
" course, unless continued for farther terms, by new acts of parliament;
" and, in general, it was provided, when any money was raised, that
" the principal should be cancelled, either by time, as in the case of
" the sale of long and short annuities, or by the surplusses of the duties
" charged with the payment of the interest. This was certainly an

“ excellent plan: but it was by no means carried steadily into exe-
 “ cution.---In the year 1720, most of the long and short annuities were
 “ converted into redeemable perpetuities, at the expence of above three
 “ millions; and the surplusses of the duties, charged with particular
 “ loans, were often so broke into, by being either charged with new
 “ loans before they had cancelled the old, or spent on current services,
 “ as to be rendered incapable of answering the end intended by them.---
 “ In consequence partly of this bad management, our debts, at the
 “ accession of the present royal family, were so much increased, as to
 “ be generally reckoned insupportable; and their reduction was made
 “ one of the first objects of parliamentary attention. This gave rise,
 “ in the year 1716, to the institution of the fund of which I am giving
 “ an account; the father of which, as is well known, was SIR ROBERT
 “ WALPOLE.---All the taxes charged with the national debt were
 “ now made perpetual, and digested into three funds, called the
 “ Aggregate, the South-sea, and the General Funds.---At the same
 “ time a considerable saving was obtained, by the reduction of interest
 “ from six to five *per cent*; and this saving, together with former
 “ savings, and all that should afterwards arise, were to be collected
 “ into a fourth fund, distinguished under the name of the SINKING
 “ FUND; the account of which was to be kept separate, and the whole
 “ produce of which was to be appropriated inviolably to the payment
 “ of the national debt.

“ IN conformity to this, the words of the law were made as strong
 “ as they could well be*: for, concerning all the surplusses to arise
 “ from time to time in the three funds I have mentioned, it declares,
 “ that they *shall be appropriated, reserved and employed, to and for the*
 “ *discharge of the principal and interest of such national debts and incum-*
 “ *brances as were incurred before the 25th of December, 1716; and to*
 “ *and for no other use, intent or purpose whatever.*---It was, therefore,
 “ impossible that any alienation of these surplusses should take place,
 “ without a direct breach of this law.”

* “ THIS law was afterwards repealed, in an act of the 5th of George I. chap. 3.”

THE Doctor then gives us a detail of the administration of this fund, in strict conformity to the letter of the act of parliament; and says, that no apprehension was entertained of any misapplication of it, till the year 1726; the improvement and inviolable application of it to the reduction of the national debt, having been recommended in most of the speeches from the throne, and echoed back from the commons: besides, says he, public credit had increased so much by its operations, that the interest of the loans then subsisting had been reduced, first from six to five, and afterwards from five to four *per cent*; and so strongly did the ministry and their friends seem to support the application which had been all along made of the sinking fund, that, in the said year, Sir Nathaniel Gould, a bank director, a member of parliament, and a ministerial writer, treats the suspicions then entertained of a design to alienate it, as indecent jealousies; and declares that, in his opinion, it was impossible it should ever be done. “But, between the years 1727
“and 1732, several new loans were made; and surplusses, that of right
“belonged to the sinking fund, were charged with them. This reduced
“its income considerably below what it should have been: but, being
“an encroachment of a less open nature, it did not, as far as I can find,
“produce any particular opposition.---From this period, however, we
“must date the ruin of the sinking fund.---The finishing blow was
“given it on the following occasion.

“In the year 1732, the land-tax had been reduced to one shilling in
“the pound; and, in order to supply the deficiency arising from hence,
“half a million had been procured for the current service, by the
“revival of the salt-duties; which, but two years before, had been
“repealed, because reckoned too burthensome on the poor.---In the
“year 1733, in order to keep the land-tax as low as it had been the
“year before, it was necessary either to borrow another half million,
“or to take it from the sinking fund: the last method was chosen, and
“proposed, by SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, to the House of Commons.---
“Long and warm debates ensued.---A proposal to alienate, in a time
“of profound peace, a fund which the law had made sacred, and the
“alienation of which no possible exigence of public affairs could
“justify,

“justify, only for the sake of keeping the land-tax for one year at one
 “shilling in the pound, justly kindled the indignation of the patriotic
 “party. They urged the prohibition of the law, the faith of par-
 “liament, and the security of the kingdom. The proposer of the
 “alienation was reminded of his inconsistency and treachery, in en-
 “deavouring to beat down that very monument of glory which he
 “had boasted of having erected for himself; and SIR JOHN BARNARD
 “warned him, that he was drawing upon himself the curses of
 “posterity.---But all arguments were vain.---The ministry pleaded
 “that the landed interest wanted ease; that there was no occasion for
 “being in a hurry to pay the national debt; and that the circumstances
 “of the kingdom had altered so much, since the establishment of the
 “sinking fund, that the competition then among the public creditors
 “was, not who should be *first*, but who should be *last* paid. Thus
 “argued, among others, SIR ROBERT WALPOLE. His reasons pre-
 “vailed; and the House of Commons, not used to refuse him any
 “thing, consented.

“THE practice of alienating the sinking fund having been thus
 “begun, it went on of course. In the next year, or 1734, 1,200,000*l.*
 “was taken from it. In 1735, it was even anticipated and mortgaged.

“THUS then expired, after an existence of about eleven years, the
 “SINKING FUND---that sacred blessing---once the nation's only hope
 “---prematurely and cruelly destroyed by its own parent.-----Could it
 “have escaped the hands of violence, it would have made us the envy
 “and the terror of the world, by leaving us, at this time, not only
 “TAX-FREE, but in possession of a treasure, greater perhaps than was
 “ever enjoyed by any kingdom.”

THE conclusions Dr. Price draws with respect to the effects of ad-
 hering to the original intention of parliament, and the consequences of
 the alienation plan, in my humble opinion, are very erroneous; but the
 refutation of them must be attempted in its proper place.

IT is sufficient for my present purpose, to observe, that the sinking
 fund has never answered the purpose of paying off the capitals, or of
 exonerating us of the taxes appropriated for the payment of the yearly
 rents

rents due on them. It is therefore inadequate to the ends proposed by its institution. Let us now proceed to the second project, which was published in 1750, and annexed to a very interesting and useful pamphlet, intituled, "An Essay on the NATIONAL DEBT and NATIONAL CAPITAL*."

THE capitals of the funds called the NATIONAL DEBT, at this period, amounted to eighty millions; and the following method was proposed by our author, for paying off the said principal sum.

"LET the eighty millions debt be divided into eighty equal parts
 "of a million each, to be paid off severally, by an equal number of
 "separate and independent classes of subscribers, whose respective con-
 "stituents shall, in consideration of such subscriptions, be, jointly and
 "severally, interested in an equivalent annuity to be granted to each
 "class, for the term aforesaid, with benefit of survivorship.

"AN instance of one class will serve for all.

"LET it be enacted, then, that the interest of one million, at three
 "one half *per cent*, be converted into a capital annuity of thirty-five
 "thousand pounds, and granted, for ninety-nine years absolute, to
 "any body or class of subscribers, who, in consideration thereof, will
 "advance the sum of one million towards discharging so much of the
 "national debt.

"THAT the one million, so to be subscribed, be divided into four
 "thousand parts or shares, of two hundred and fifty pounds; and the
 "capital annuity of thirty-five thousand pounds, into four thousand
 "lesser annuities, of eight pounds, fifteen shillings each, answerable
 "to the said number of shares, and vested in the individuals of each
 "class, in proportion to the number of shares subscribed by them
 "severally and respectively.

"THAT every person subscribing two hundred and fifty pounds, or
 "one share, be entitled to one of the said lesser annuities, during the
 "life of any person he shall nominate, subject to the limitation in the
 "said grant; and so in proportion to any greater number of shares:
 "provided always, that the number of his nominees be ever equal to
 "the number of his shares.

* By Andrew Hooke, Esq. of Bristol. London, printed for W. Owen, 1750.

"THAT,

“ THAT, in consideration of his sinking the principal money, every
 “ subscriber be further entitled to such annual augmentation of his
 “ annuity, or annuities, as shall from time to time, accrue by casualties
 “ of mortality among the nominees of such class; so that, before the
 “ expiration of the original term, the whole capital annuity of thirty-
 “ five thousand pounds may vest in such subscriber, or subscribers, or
 “ his or their representatives, as the case shall happen, whose nominee,
 “ or nominees, shall be the last survivor, or survivors, of the said class.

“ THAT the government creditors have the preference to all other
 “ subscribers, for so much principal money as shall, at the time of such
 “ subscription, be actually and *bona fide* due to them from the crown;
 “ and that, notwithstanding the classes, as such, are by this plan to
 “ be independent of each other, yet that individuals may become sub-
 “ scribers in as many classes as they please, and their nominees in one
 “ class be nominees in every other class, if they shall think fit. And
 “ lastly,

“ THAT the government, on payment of the capital annuities of
 “ thirty-five thousand pounds to the several classes, be absolutely dis-
 “ charged from all future claims of individuals, touching their re-
 “ spective shares, proportions and interests therein; and that all matters
 “ relating thereto be transacted among themselves, and determined by
 “ a court of directors, to be elected and appointed in such manner as
 “ shall be thought fit, who, by law, shall be fully authorized and
 “ empowered to make the respective dividends, and, from time to time,
 “ adjust all claims thereto: subject, nevertheless, to an appeal to the
 “ LORDS OF THE TREASURY, who, in a summary way, shall finally
 “ hear and determine the same.”

THE only objection of weight, to my scheme, says Mr. Hooke, is,
 that in this way of paying off the national debt, a heavy load of
 grievous taxes on the necessaries of life, such as soap, candles, leather,
 salt, &c. must inevitably be fixed on the subjects for a long term of
 years to come, irredeemable by parliament. This confession, on his
 part, clearly demonstrates, that his project, the second in the order of
 time, and in point of merit, could not answer the chief object of
 paying

paying off the capitals of the funds. The most onerous taxes (the first to be taken off) were to remain permanently settled on successive generations, for ninety-nine years.

BUT another material objection, which indeed is common to all the schemes I have hitherto perused, is, the great length of time; the number of years before any considerable advantage can arise to government, or to the public, by adopting them. In some, the operations are so very slow, that it could hardly be imagined men would encourage them, because they could not have the satisfaction of living to see the good effects of them; and it was too much to expect, that they would alter the state of their funded property on speculative plans, the future consequences of which they could not experimentally determine.

THE truth of the matter is, that as early as the year 1719, hints were thrown out in print, that if the capital sums, then called the national debt, were thrown into a general course of circulation, it would be the same thing as paying them off; provided that, in both cases, the burthensome taxes must necessarily subsist for any great number of years: and on this very principle, STEPHEN BARBIER presented his expedient for paying off the public debts to GEORGE THE FIRST, on the sixth of May in that year.

IT was, to establish a market for the forty millions, the amount of the capitals at that time, by issuing notes or bonds for the payment of principal and interest, six months after date: the facility of negotiating these notes, upon any extraordinary emergency, he apprehended, would make people willing to hold them, as long as possible; or, if they parted with them, he conceived, others would be very ready to purchase, therefore very few would be brought into the Treasury to be paid off at the expiration of the six months: and on this supposition he left it in the option of government to pay them off, or to mark the continuance of them for another six months; and so on till their final redemption.

THE extensive circulation since accomplished by the transfers at the Bank, by negotiating Exchequer bills, and bills for government contracts,

contracts, such as Navy bills, &c. are only improvements upon this outline.

BUT the important national advantage he proposed to derive from carrying his expedient into execution, being what Great Britain has long enjoyed, by the open market for her funds, it is proper to mention in his own words: "The forty millions debt is now (supposing his expedient had been adopted) become a national bank of forty millions; and what was an oppression, is turned into a treasure: for it is a sort of addition to the national stock, which must of course advance the public credit in proportion, promote the land's interest, encourage trade at home, and add life and strength to commerce abroad. You have then here, in effect, a mine of an immense and endless treasure; even such a one, that all the Peruvian mountains are not able to afford the like; for it is always ready and at hand. Let the king and parliament speak the word, and you have, upon the spot, any sum you want*."

SUCH clear reasoning could not escape the notice of that able minister, SIR ROBERT WALPOLE; though the author's expedient was, in many respects, defective and impracticable. I am therefore not surprised to find that, in 1733, he should declare, in the House of Commons, "The circumstances of the kingdom to be so altered since the establishment of the sinking fund, that the competition then among the creditors was, not who should be *first*, but who should be *last* paid." The principles of circulation were better known, and began to operate more freely; and people of property grew tired of all projects for paying off capitals, which they found they could not employ to better advantage, with equal certainty and security.

IT is no wonder, therefore, that Mr. Hooke's very plausible and judicious scheme, should likewise be neglected in 1750; especially as he himself had removed the remaining doubts and fears concerning the solidity of public credit, in the very essay to which it is annexed: an essay of so much consequence to the creditors of the nation, and to

* An Expedient to pay the Public Debts, by Stephen Barbier. London, printed for J. Roberts, 1719.

government, that I wish to see it reprinted annually, with the requisite additions to the tables.

AFTER he had dispelled all the gloomy apprehensions of an approaching national bankruptcy, and fairly demonstrated, by accurate calculations, that the then NATIONAL DEBT of eighty millions was only as one to twelve, to the national capital (consisting of lands, money, wrought plate, jewels, bullion, live and dead stock)---as four to five to the annual income of the nation---and to the annual increment of the national capital, only as seven to one: he could not be surprised, if the public was not solicitous about his scheme. His own calculations, and his deductions from them, demonstrated the inexpediency of the slow operations of an extinction (by survivorships) at the end of ninety-nine years, of any part of a national debt; the paying off which he owns, in one part of his essay, is not a matter of that importance to the community, as is generally imagined; because it might subsist many years longer, without danger to the constitution; and even be increased to double the sum.---One hundred and sixty millions!---(thirty-four millions more than the present reputed debt) ---Besides, his scheme did not offer any advantages to individuals, equal to the rising value of money in time of war; and by quieting mens minds, on the idle subject of a national bankruptcy, he threw out a new lure, to engage them to advance more money to government, on the tried and approved system of redeemable annuities, attended with douceurs, which make them more profitable than his scheme.

THE causes already assigned, have frustrated all similar projects, from the year 1750, to the present time. But they have not prevented repeated publications on the same topic.

WE meet with nothing, however, deserving our serious attention, within the last twenty years, except the late admired performances of MR. PINTO, and of DR. PRICE; both men of learning, highly esteemed in the literary world; and the latter celebrated for his skill in algebraical demonstrations. The proposals submitted to the consideration of our government, by these gentlemen, are the most rational, and have the appearance of being the most practicable of any that have been hitherto

published. But still they are inexpedient, considering the present state of our finances, and cannot effectuate any valuable improvement of the public revenues for a great number of years: therefore, they will have the same fate as all former schemes, founded on the erroneous principle of paying off the capitals of the reputed national debt: and I hope it will not be considered by them, or their friends, as any diminution of that veneration in which I hold them, that I proceed to point out the inefficacy of their respective plans.

MR. PINTO, after having improved on the ideas of STEPHEN BARBER, MR. HOOKE, SIR JAMES STEUART, and others, by giving us the clearest demonstrations of the advantages which the nation has derived from the national debt, and of the solidity and permanency of the public credit of Great Britain, (in his celebrated Treatise on Circulation) unfortunately destroys the force of his own arguments; for he falls into the common error of supposing it necessary to diminish the capitals of the funds, by paying them off in times of peace; he would have them reduced to eighty millions; and he gives it as his opinion, that this will be a sufficient reduction: to which he adds, that it would be impolitic and dangerous, not to leave at least sixty millions unliberated. The means he proposes for accomplishing this reduction are---an augmentation of the sinking fund; and the conversion of different portions of the capitals of our funds, at sundry periods, into life annuities, at seven and an half *per cent*; and the following specimen is given of this operation, by which twelve millions and an half may be paid off, by applying only four hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds of the produce of the sinking fund yearly, for a certain number of years: part of which would be retrieved or recovered by the said fund, every year, by the death of annuitants.

AT the time of stating his proposal, three millions and an half of four *per cent* annuities, 1761, subsisted; they have since been paid off: but the operation will be exactly the same, if we take three millions and an half of the consolidated four *per cents*, which, though irredeemable till 1781, might be converted, by option of the proprietors, into life annuities, if Mr. Pinto's scheme was carried into execution.

“LET

“ LET a subscription be opened to create life annuities, at seven and
 “ an half *per cent*, and let money, or four, or three *per cent*. annuities
 “ be received indiscriminately. The confidence that is placed in govern-
 “ ment, and the good faith of parliament---the immense luxury of the
 “ times, which enclines most people to increase their incomes---the
 “ desire that most parents have to assure a little life annuity to their
 “ children, as a small provision against accidents---all these causes would
 “ combine to convert twelve millions and an half into life annuities
 “ immediately, if I mistake not, and would greatly efface the phantom
 “ of the national debt. The interests of these twelve millions and an
 “ half being extinguished, and the taxes appropriated for the payment
 “ of them preserved, the sinking fund would be increased four hundred
 “ and ten thousand pounds *per annum*; and with four hundred and
 “ twenty-five thousand pounds addition from the unappropriated pro-
 “ duce of the said fund, without imposing any new tax, the life annuities
 “ would be paid*, and the sinking fund would still remain strong enough
 “ to continue other extinctions yearly; acquiring, every year, new
 “ powers, by the accretion of the interests of the ordinary extinctions,
 “ and of the life annuities which would fall in by the death of annuitants.

“ THESE surplusses of interest being issued out to the public, at the
 “ end of the year would return into the old funds, in which the life
 “ annuitants would place their money:---the mass of the old funds
 “ diminishing, their value would be supported---credit would acquire
 “ new strength---and its circulation be less liable to be embarrassed, by
 “ the small volume of the ancient debt, so greatly dreaded. This
 “ operation, I imagine, might be repeated with success a year or two
 “ after the first conversion to life annuities; and would serve to con-
 “ vince the most obstinate, that the Colossus of the national debt might
 “ be conquered, or reduced to such limits as it would be imprudent
 “ and dangerous not to allow it: since I have demonstrated, that there

* 3,500,000 <i>l.</i> at four <i>per cent</i> , costs the nation annually	140,000 <i>l.</i>	} total — 410,000 <i>l.</i>
9,000,000 <i>l.</i> at three <i>per cent</i> , costs	270,000 <i>l.</i>	
12,500,000 <i>l.</i> at seven and an half <i>per cent</i> , costs	835,000 <i>l.</i>	deficiency 425,000 <i>l.</i>

to be supplied by the sinking fund for some years.

“ must

“ must absolutely be a sufficient circulation of these artificial riches,
 “ which credit has created, which credit supports, and which are
 “ necessary for its own existence.”

THE general objection that has been made to the alteration here proposed, of converting part of the capitals of the reputed NATIONAL DEBT into life annuities, is, that the public revenues could not provide for the annual payments of these annuities, without creating additional taxes. This Mr. Pinto obviates, by the use he makes of the growing produce of the sinking fund: and could I persuade myself, that re-funding of capitals, without abolishing entirely, the taxes imposed and appropriated for the payment of the annual rents or annuities, would answer any beneficial purpose to the community, I should most earnestly recommend his scheme, as the only one which seems to promise temporary advantages.

BUT when I consider, that one year of war may occasion a new loan, equal to the first unnecessary extinction; that, if no such event happens, it will be thirty-three years, or more (according to Dr. Price's tables of the medium expectation of life) before it will be possible to abolish any of the oppressive taxes by its means; that the present circumstances of the nation have raised life annuities to ten and eleven *per cent*, on indisputable security; and lastly, that Mr. Pinto himself assures us, we may go on borrowing to any amount, while we can raise money to pay the interest of new loans. I own, I am confirmed in my opinion, that government has no business to refund capitals, always to be found at the open market; and that it is a misapplication of the sinking fund, to employ its surplusses in this manner.

ANOTHER proposal of the same gentleman, is, to create an auxiliary and permanent sinking fund, to operate equally in times of war or peace. For this purpose he recommends some new taxes, which shall be considered in the third division of my subject.

THE operations of this auxiliary sinking fund, are intended to keep down the rate of interest; and he imagines, that the uninterrupted reimbursement of one million and an half annually, in time of war, would have this good effect; and enable government to raise new loans,
 on

on easier terms. But I am totally at a loss to conceive, how the throwing this money into the market, should dispose the people, who had just disengaged it from a disadvantageous contract, (perhaps three *per cent.* annuities) to be thereby induced to advance it again, on low terms; when it is more than probable, that the prospect of a long war, and the immediate pressing demands of government, would raise the interest of money to five, or six *per cent.* I am certain that, in this case, it would be more beneficial to apply the million and an half to the current services of the year. At all events, I imagine no administration would be so absurd as to expend one million and an half yearly, in fruitless reimbursements of funded capitals, while the exigencies of the nation required ten or twelve millions to be raised on the same plan, and added to the old funds.

WE will now proceed to Dr. Price's scheme; which is no other than a restoration of the SINKING FUND:---“And if the whole of it “cannot be unalienably applied to its original use, let some part of it “be so applied, that the nation may, at least, enjoy a chance of being “saved.” Most certainly, not a part only, but the whole, without loss of time, if there is any chance that the nation will be ruined, unless it is so applied. But I apprehend, I have already demonstrated, that all our fears on that head are merely chimerical. Yet, for the satisfaction of the public, I must intreat the worthy Doctor, who is a complete master of figures, to continue, with his usual accuracy, the valuable tables of Mr. Hooke; stating the annual increment of our coin, personal stock, and land capital: and, if I am not mistaken, he will then find, the national property so considerably increased by our territorial and commercial acquisitions, that, if we must still call the capitals of our funds the NATIONAL DEBT, we are at a greater distance from the failure of public credit, than we were in 1750; and that, if we derive the same benefits from our extensive commerce, for twenty years to come, we shall be in less danger, from such a debt amounting to two hundred millions, than we were from the debt outstanding at the death of QUEEN ANN, amounting to not quite fifty-four.

BUT

BUT I am not without hopes, that my new hypothesis will be admitted; in which case, he will see the vast disproportion between the real NATIONAL DEBT, I mean the four millions and an half yearly rents or annuities, payable to the public creditors, and the annual income or produce of the whole national capital.

IN a word, let him take it either way, from his known candour, it cannot be doubted, but he will entertain a more favourable opinion of the state of our finances, than that, which he has rather warmly expressed, in his Appeal to the Public on the National Debt.

RESOLVED not to swell this volume with arithmetical calculations and tables, I shall only mention one proof of the increase of the national capital, easily to be ascertained by Mr. Hooke's tables. Land, in 1748, was worth only twenty years purchase; it is now worth thirty; consequently, the amount of our land capital is one third more than it was in 1748: and, if the same proportion holds with respect to coin, which may I think be fairly inferred from the rise of land, these two articles, independant of personal stock, will be sufficient to convince us, that we are in better circumstances, all things considered, than at any former period of our history, since we became one of the first powers of Europe, as a body politic, and the chief, as a commercial people. But how will the account stand, if it shall appear, that the third article alone, has been more than trebled in the twenty-two years which have elapsed since Mr. Hooke's last calculation! and, if I am rightly informed by some eminent merchants, whom I have consulted on the supposed value of personal stock, this is nearly the true state of it. Surely then, all our fears must be dispelled concerning the principal sum of one hundred and twenty-six millions: we shall not want to be paid off; and shall only wish to see the surplusses of the public revenue applied either to the extinction of the most burthensome of our taxes, or if that cannot take place, to the formation of a new fund for the payment of the annuities of future loans, without laying any more taxes on the people, in times of war.

FOR this seeming digression, I shall make no apology; as it paves the way to a demonstration of the inexpediency of Dr. Price's system.

WE

WE are told, by this gentleman, that there are three ways in which a kingdom may apply the savings, or surplusses, known by the title of the sinking fund.

“FIRST, The interests disengaged, from time to time, by the payments made with it, may be themselves applied to the payment of the public debts.

“OR, secondly, They may be spent on current services.

“OR, thirdly, They may be immediately annihilated, by abolishing the taxes charged with them.

“IN the first way of employing a sinking fund, it becomes a fund increasing itself. Every new interest disengaged by it, containing the same powers with it, and joining its operations to it; and the same being true of every interest disengaged by every interest, it must act, not merely with an increasing force, but with a force, the increase of which is continually accelerated; and which, therefore, however small at first, must in time become equal to any effect.

“IN the second way of applying a sinking fund, it admits of no increase; and must act for ever with the same force. In other words ---A sinking fund, according to the first method of applying it, is, if I may be allowed the comparison, like a grain of corn sown, which, by having its produce sown, and the produce of that produce, and so on, is capable of an increase, that will soon stock a province, or support a kingdom. On the contrary---A sinking fund, according to the second way of applying it, is like a seed, the produce of which is consumed; and which, therefore, can be of no farther use; and has all its powers destroyed.---What has been now said of the second mode, is true in a higher degree of the third: for, in this case, the disengaged interests, instead of being either added to the fund, or spent from year to year on useful services, are immediately given up.

“IN short, a fund of the first sort, is money bearing compound interest--a fund of the second sort, is money bearing simple interest---and a fund of the third sort, is money bearing no interest. The difference between them is, therefore, properly infinite.”

THUS have I given an analysis of the leading principle, on which Dr. Price's scheme turns. The whole depends on the progressive profits of compound interest; the advantages of which are so great, that the Doctor tells us---“ONE PENNY, put out at Our Saviour's birth to five *per cent*, compound interest, would, before this time, have increased to a greater sum, than would be contained in a hundred and fifty millions of earths, all solid gold---But if put out to simple interest, it would, in the same time, have amounted to no more than seven shillings and four-pence half-penny.”

ON the strength of this speculation, he is angry with our government for having hitherto chosen to improve money in the *last*, rather than the *first* of these ways. I hope, however, he will not be displeased with me, if, without following him through all his mathematical demonstrations, I tell him, in few words, that these speculations are curious and amusing, but can never be of any real utility in the affairs of kingdoms, for they are totally impracticable, owing to the fluctuations in all human systems of policy; and I shall prove this by his own arguments.

IN one part of his appeal, he supposes a period of eighty-six years for the effectual operation of an annual sum, set apart for the paying off the national debt, by the profits of compound interest. But the least interruption, an alienation of the sum, though ever so necessary, destroys the effect of the whole plan: and I aver it to be as impossible to avoid such interruptions to any regular finance operations, in the course of eighty-six years, in a commercial kingdom, as to place a penny out, so as to yield compound interest for 1772 years, without interruption. These computations look very well in figures, and upon tables: they are proper entertainment for the Royal Society; but they will not do business at the Treasury.

THE plea assigned by the administrators of our finances, for applying the produce of the sinking fund to current services, is, according to Dr. Price, “That when money is wanted, it makes no difference whether it is taken from hence, or procured by making a new loan charged on new funds.” This he calls a SOPHISM; and asserts, in
opposition:

opposition to it, that the difference between these two ways of procuring money, is no less than infinite.

I SHOULD readily admit this argument, if it could be proved, that every thing which is barely possible, is practicable; but while no instance can be brought from history, of any one nation having employed the savings of its revenues in placing them out at compound interest, I cannot but lament that so much time and good sense should be misapplied in forming calculations and tables, to confirm theories, which no man will deny, but which all will allow can never be reduced to practice, even by private families, much less by kingdoms.

ASTONISHING would be the produce of one hundred pounds set apart by a fond parent, as the basis of fortunes for five children; and what an easy method of providing for them in about forty years, to employ it at compound interest! But unfortunately, a variety of circumstances must necessarily occur, to interrupt the train of progressive multiplication on which these fortunes would solely depend.---It would be ridiculous to enumerate them, they are so easy to be conceived. If the money was lent on private security, failures, retarded payments, and other causes, would occasion deductions and loss of time, which would overturn the whole system: if on public, the death of the parent, the separation and allotment of a fifth to each child, the necessary alienation of the whole to executors or trustees, the replacing the principal, and several other incidents, would cause similar interruptions, attended with the same consequences; for no time is to be lost---the very hour the interest of a capital is received, it must be placed out, to engender its interest; and if an holiday intervenes, if an executor takes time to prove a will at the commons, or to attend on other affairs---adieu to the vast benefits arising from compound interest! You see no allowance for loss of time in the computed tables, nor for any incidental expences, the amount of which would absorb a whole year's income of the interest upon interest of small sums.

For instance, I receive, in the present moment, three pounds, for one year's interest, on one hundred pounds three *per cent.* annuities; to follow the advantages of compound interest according to the tables,

the three pounds must be instantly invested in the same manner, or at least at the same rate of interest as the one hundred pounds; and supposing this done, at the expiration of another year it will yield me twenty-one pence, half-penny---which must be again instantly set to work in like manner to produce its farthings:---but in the common course of things, either loss of time, or expences, we may plainly perceive, would destroy the whole connection, which must be preserved entire, to complete its alchemical operations.

DR. PRICE confesses, that the duration of the lives of individuals is confined within limits so narrow, as not to admit, in any great degree, of the advantages that may be derived from the amazing increase of money, bearing compound interest. But a period of fifty or sixty, or one hundred years, being little in the duration of kingdoms, he adds, "They are capable of securing them in almost any degree." The very contrary, however, I apprehend to be the case; because the fluctuations and revolutions in the most permanent revenues of a kingdom, occasion very material alterations in the state of its finances, in less periods of time than those he has given: which makes his system more hazardous and uncertain with respect to government, than individuals. An increase of a successful course of smuggling; or a decrease of the consumption of excised commodities, through unavoidable accidents, such as an epidemical disease carrying off great numbers of people; are sufficient to impair the growing powers of the sinking fund, to retard or suspend its operations, and consequently, to overwhelm the project of employing even 400,000*£* *per annum* regularly, at compound interest. I must therefore declare, that, considering the present circumstances of the kingdom, the Doctor's plan is not so eligible as Mr. Hooke's; because he proposes not only to continue the present taxes for a great number of years, but to borrow any future sums government may want, by the creation of new taxes; that the sinking fund may be at liberty to employ its produce, or a considerable part of it, at compound interest; in order to pay off ideal capitals; which we do not want to receive from the hands of government, while we can realize them at pleasure, in the open market.

THE second method of employing the sinking fund, especially in times of war, is rational, prudent and humane: nor can I conceive how any ministry could urge so weak a plea for this application of it, as the Doctor mentions; for the fact is, that whenever the produce of the sinking fund has been granted for current services, there has been a very great, instead of no difference, between taking the money wanted from it, or procuring it by a new loan, on new appropriated taxes. In the first place, higher interest must have been given for the new loans, than that which would have been extinguished by paying off the same quantity of the capitals of the old funds: secondly, it would have been impolitic and cruel to have oppressed the people with additional taxes, while a resource was in hand to prevent such an odious measure.---A measure which must have furnished the Doctor himself with fresh reasons for exclaiming, as he does, against the number of tax-gatherers, of various denominations.

THE third use to be made of the sinking fund, equity and sound policy seem to demand, in times of profound tranquility. It is then that the whole nation has a right to expect the extinction of the most burthenome of its taxes. But, instead of this, we have seen principal sums inconsiderately paid off, and the taxes which were created and expressly appropriated to the payment of the interest of these extinguished capitals, continued, and, in fact, thereby made perpetual. This is the mal-administration of the finances I mean to canvass *.

A FOURTH method of applying the growing produce of the sinking fund, in times of peace, when it is not wanted for current services, I shall beg leave to call my own project. It is founded on this revenue principle of the ancients: "To make provision, in times of public tranquillity, for the exigencies of the state, in times of public danger and general expence."

* An instance of this has happened lately.—The three and an half *per cents*, borrowed in 1756, were paid off, both principal and interest, in 1770. An additional stamp-duty of twenty shillings on licences for retailing beer and other exciseable liquors, an additional duty on cards and dice, and an excise on silver plate, were all granted to raise the interest of this loan; but provided they did not produce a sufficiency, the remainder was charged on the sinking fund: so that, by this contrivance, those taxes make a part of the sinking fund, and were not taken off, as in justice they ought to be, on the annihilation of the loan that gave birth to them.

IF the annual produce of the sinking fund was alienated and appropriated to the formation of a new fund, which should be faithfully applied to the sole purpose of discharging the interest or annuities of any future loans the government may have occasion to borrow, I imagine this desirable end would be attained; we should be enabled to borrow as many millions as we could possibly want (with honest management) in the course of the next war that shall happen; and government might very safely declare to the people, that, having determined to continue the present taxes, to indemnify them for this necessary measure, no new ones shall be imposed, on any pretext whatever, till all, or the greatest part of the old are abolished.

THE common objection against amassing treasures in this kingdom, I am sensible, will be opposed to this plan. It will be said, that the power and influence of the ministry and of the crown, will be thereby increased; but in reply, let it be observed, that the new fund should, by an act for that purpose, be solely at the disposal of the three estates of the realm in parliament assembled; and the application of any part of its produce to the purpose of paying the interests of new loans, should necessarily constitute an enacting clause in the acts for raising such new supplies.

THE success of this scheme depends on a general conviction of the truth of the propositions already advanced; and of the following, which I shall endeavour to demonstrate in the subsequent pages.

No abolition or considerable reduction of the present taxes can possibly take place, within the next fifty years, on the present plan of making partial, annual reimbursements of the capitals of the reputed national debt.

NEW additional taxes must be created, when another war breaks out, if the government does not adopt some plan in time of peace, to make provision for the interests of future loans.

BUT if we discard all idle notions about refunding capitals, and advert solely to the last mentioned object, no new taxes can possibly be required, unless any of those violent revolutions in government should happen, which overturn the best systems of political œconomy.

ALTERATIONS and considerable improvements may be made in the public revenues of the kingdom, by substituting more equal and less burthensome taxes than those now laid on the absolute necessities of life; and by other expedients, which I shall submit, with great deference, to the consideration of the very able and active minister now presiding at the head of the treasury department; whose only defect seems to be, that he is too much swayed by ancient prejudices, concerning the weight of the nominal capitals of the reputed national debt, and by official precedents: much, however, may be expected from his invincible fortitude, if he is once convinced of the necessity of adopting new measures; and we have already seen frequent intimations thrown out in the public papers, of his intention to give some relief to the industrious lower classes of the people, by taking off, or reducing, the excises on soap, candles and leather. But, as we have just observed, this cannot be done in the present circumstances of the nation, otherwise than by providing other funds, whose produce will make up the deficiency occasioned by such desirable alterations.

THIS naturally leads to an enquiry into the nature and consequences of taxes, and of the best methods of levying them, consistent with the principles of equity and humanity.

P A R T III.

O N

T A X A T I O N,

A N D

The best Means of improving the Public Revenues of this Kingdom.

IT is universally allowed, that the subjects of every state are in duty bound to support the administration of government, and to protect their country from the hostile attempts of foreign enemies. There are but three ways of discharging this general obligation: by personal services; by contributions in kind; or by aids in specie. We have shewn, in the first part of this treatise, by what means military services, and provincial quotas in kind, came to cease. We have traced the origin, and justified the complete establishment of public credit in England; for the support of which, general, and we may say perpetual, aids in specie are indispensably requisite: and, we have demonstrated beyond a doubt, that the nominal capitals, vulgarly called the national debt, abstracted from all considerations of the annuities or annual rents they are entitled to, are not a national grievance by which this nation can ever be greatly embarrassed, much less involved in bankruptcy.

Our next business is to enquire into the consequences of the real national debt: I mean, the sum of four millions and an half annually due, and payable half yearly, by express stipulation to the public creditors of the nation, as well foreigners as natives; and for which the honour, credit and good faith of the three estates of the realm, that is to say, of the whole community, as a body politic, stands engaged.

HERE the weight of the charge lies:---this annual debt is become a permanent expence to the nation; every individual is obliged to contribute more or less towards defraying it, by different modes of taxation; and all taxes, of what nature soever, are paid, in every kingdom, with a bad grace.

THIS may be accounted for, from the following causes:

WANT of reflection, or a bad disposition, on the part of the subjects: or,

A DEFECT on the part of government, in the nature of the taxes; in the manner of levying them; or in the administration of them, when accumulated.

THE separate discussion of these points, will conduct us to the source of all the complaints against the burthen of our taxes, imposed for the annual discharge of four millions and an half, the only actual, permanent debt of the nation.

IN the political part of this volume, it was demonstrated, that the right of representation is the inestimable privilege, which gives to the British constitution, pre-eminence over all other forms of government. A most corroborating evidence, in confirmation of this truth, arises out of our present subject.

THE aids, or subsidies required by government, are agreed to and voted by the representatives of the people: the ways and means of levying them in specie, are likewise assented to by the same body. This process gives to our whole system of taxation, the semblance of voluntary contributions: I would have said, that they are so in reality: but as the money bills are less debated than any other point, because not one eighth part of the House have the least knowledge of the Elements of Finances; and two thirds come prepared to grant all that the minister for the time being requires, in the very mode he prescribes; the House of Commons can hardly claim the merit of having taxed their constituents advisedly and freely.

HENCE it is, that obligations on the part of government, coeval with the right of taxation, have been violated, with impunity; and the subjects in general, but more especially those who are not virtually represented *, have had just cause of complaint.

* THE right of representation is, in this respect, incomplete. In so essential a point as that of levying money on the whole community, it should seem consistent with the genius of British freedom, that every housekeeper, every father, or master of a family, whether a freeholder or not, should be effectively represented.

As it is the duty of subjects to contribute to the public expences of the nation, so is it likewise that of the administrators of its revenues, to levy their contributions in the most easy and equitable manner, that can possibly be suggested: another indispensable obligation on their part is, to apply them for the purposes only, for which they were granted, with the strictest œconomy: and the last, though not the least duty incumbent on them, is, to reduce or abolish the taxes, which the necessities of the state have created, when its circumstances will clearly admit of such relief being given to the subjects.

THERE are many things requisite to make a tax easy and equitable.

LENIENT measures must be pursued in the collection; and it must be made at the least possible expence.

FOR oppressive, violent measures, will excite revolt, or drive the unhappy subjects to seek a remedy in the frauds of smuggling; and the same mischiefs are always to be dreaded from an expensive mode of collection; for it will be urged, that with proper œconomy, by diminishing the number of collectors and their salaries, less contributions might suffice for the exigencies of the state.

TAXES should be proportioned to the abilities of the subjects respectively; or they cannot be either easy or equitable. They must be intolerable, if they reduce industrious subjects to a distressful situation: they must be inequitable, if they are unequally levied, so that the classes of inhabitants, the least able to bear them, pay the largest proportion of the public contributions; or that the inhabitants of the same class, are more rigidly assessed in one part of the kingdom, than in another.

BUT the most essential measure to render taxes both easy and equitable is, to impose them in such a manner, as that a great part, if not the whole, may be recovered by the inferior classes of the people, through the medium of their own industry.

M. DE MIRABEAU, in his Theory of Taxes, says, "That it would
" be the philosopher's stone to a state, to find the means of setting the
" machine of the Finances in motion, by regular springs---not only
" without exaction---without rigour---without profusion---but with
" emulation;"

"emulation;" that is to say---so that all orders of the subjects should vie with each other, in the integrity and chearfulness of their contributions.

BUT this grand desideratum, like its prototype, the mass of wealth to be acquired by the millennial operations of compound interest, subsists only in idea. The prejudices and passions of mankind are so strong, that they will never contribute liberally to the public expences, either in proportion to their property, or to the benefits they derive from the government they live under: for Mr. Pinto's severe remark, though it comes from the pen of a Jew*, is very just. "The people of Europe, though they are Christians, do not always follow the gospel; they do not constantly render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." It is therefore the duty of the managers of the public revenues, to humour the frailties of their fellow-mortals; and to approach, as nearly as possible, to the perfection just delineated, in the distribution, collection and administration of the contributions levied upon the subjects.

LET us now enquire how far this is attended to in England.

THE land-tax, one of the most productive, and which, if put under proper regulations, would produce one million more annually than it does at present, is, in its own nature, easy and equitable: but as it is now levied, it is oppressive; because it is disproportionate, consequently partial†. It is called indeed, a rate of so much in the pound; but when this rate is four shillings, many estates pay only six-pence, while others pay six or seven shillings, owing to the mode of raising the sum total of two millions (which it has been estimated at, and been made to produce for some years past) by assessments, and re-assessments; the latter serving to make up the deficiencies of the sum at which each district or county is assessed. Estates are likewise rated according to valuations made so far back as the Revolution, when lands were not

* Mr. de Voltaire files this gentleman Le Juif célèbre.

† Les Terres ne sont point taxées en Angleterre sur un pied juste & égal. *Traité de Circulation.*

worth above eighteen years purchase: they now sell publicly for thirty, yet no new assessment is made, though a moderate advance, levied with discretion and impartiality, would enable government to extinguish the oppressive taxes on the necessities of life. This, with similar judicious and equitable arrangements of the land-tax, has often been unsuccessfully proposed. SIR JAMES STEUART, the latest writer of repute on the subject, observes, that the most proper method of imposing a land tax is, without doubt, to confine the imposition to the rents of lands only, and to lay it on in proportion to them: but, says he, how is it to be expected that ever such a plan can take place, in a nation where the proprietors of land govern the state?

My answer is, let a spirited minister obtain the confidence of the king and of the people, by the rectitude and sagacity of his conduct, and he may do almost what he pleases in parliament. If he has the courage to propose the expedient, the nation will support him in it; and those that revolt against it in the House, need not govern the state long, for he may try the experiment at the eve of a dissolution of parliament; and I apprehend, if the people once have their eyes opened to their true interests, they will not re-elect the opposers of this just improvement of the public revenues.

THOUGH a time of peace is not the proper season for imposing taxes, it is most assuredly, the only one, for making beneficial changes and regulations. It is then, that experiments should be tried, and improvements attempted, though at the risk of suffering some temporary deficiencies. If any should happen from substituting more equitable and easy taxes, in the room of those proposed to be abolished, the sinking fund ought in justice to bear them; for the excises on candles, soap and leather, were made perpetual, for the creation of that fund, at a time when they must otherwise have been extinguished; the capitals being refunded, for the interests of which they were imposed and appropriated: and, undoubtedly, this method of employing a small part of the sinking fund, would be more equitable, and better approved by the public, than the present useless measure of paying off

small

small portions of nominal capitals*. The system of policy with respect to money matters, being totally changed, from lending with an intention to be repaid the capital, to lending with an intention to receive a perpetual interest; capitals are now out of the question; and the grand object a British minister, at the head of the treasury department, ought to have in view, is, to keep up a permanent fund, for satisfying the only demand the creditors of the nation can make on government. If he does this by easy, equitable contributions, he will keep the rate of interest low; he will prevent any great fluctuations in the price of the transferable capitals at market; which will answer all the purposes of refunding capitals, by facilitating alienations, when individuals are disposed to part with their property in the funds; and he will be enabled to borrow fresh capitals, if the wants of the state require it, "by offering the smallest possible advantages a pen can describe" to monied men.

ARE not all these benefits worth acquiring, even at the hazard of small deficiencies, to be occasioned by equitable alterations in the system of taxation? But if ways and means can be pointed out to remove well-founded complaints, which make some of the taxes not so productive as they ought to be, and at the same time to augment the public revenue, by desirable alterations; surely the minister will not reject them, merely because they come from the hands of a private individual. It has been the fatal error of most of his predecessors, to imagine that all revenue knowledge was confined to the Treasury Board, or to the committee of ways and means---but I have far better hopes of Lord North.

ALL taxes levied in specie, may be divided into two classes.

THOSE which are raised on possessions; and,

THOSE which are levied on consumption.

THE first, must chiefly affect the opulent and the idle.

* WHEN, in the early times of public credit, the repayment of the capital was the chief object of the lender, a much more extensive fund was necessary than at present, when no more is required than the payment of the interest. See Sir James Stuart's *Political Economy*, vol. ii. p. 465,

THE latter, will mostly affect the industrious lower classes of the people; and will injure the commerce of the state, by discouraging population.

THE land-tax, that on personal stock incorporated with it, the tax on coaches, on silver plate, on houses, and on windows, are all that I can recollect of the first class.

AN explanatory catalogue of those which compose the second, would form a large volume.

“ At the beginning of the reign of GEORGE II, we had subsisting
 “ thirty-eight branches of customs, twenty-nine branches of excise,
 “ and eighteen branches of inland duties; in all eighty-five different
 “ kinds of taxes: and the laws relating to them make by far the
 “ greatest part of the many large folio volumes of statutes enacted since
 “ the Revolution; whereas all the statutes, from the beginning of the
 “ monarchy, to that famous æra, are (including the original French
 “ and Latin, and the English translation) contained in two folio volumes;
 “ of which those that relate to taxes, make but a very inconsiderable
 “ part*.”

SINCE the last mentioned period, five new articles have been added to the customs, nine to the excises, and two to the inland duties. We have, therefore, an hundred and one different species of taxes subsisting at this time; of which only four can be said to affect chiefly the opulent and idle: all the rest, being laid upon articles of consumption, affect all orders of men in the community; not excepting those who subsist on charity. It is no wonder, therefore, that, on the one hand, great complaints should be made of the weight of the annual national debt; and, on the other, that elaborate treatises should be written in defence of taxation in general; but more especially of that prevailing species of it, which takes in every article of universal consumption.

WE will, in the first place, attend to the just complaints, which have augmented progressively with this species of taxes.

THE tributes, aids, or subsidies granted by our ancestors to their kings, for the support of their civil government, and to defray all

* Cunningham's History of Taxes, part iv.

public expences, consisted in certain duties on the importation and exportation of goods and merchandise: these, at length, obtained the denomination of customs, because such duties had been usually or customarily paid; the very term, therefore, shews, that they were often temporary; and many branches of them were accordingly suspended at different periods. But as soon as public credit was established, and the demands of the state increased, they were all made perpetual, under the title of the Old Subsidy; and other customs were added to them, from time to time, under the title of the New Subsidy.

THESE are the most natural contributions that can be levied, next to those on possessions; and they are consistent with the genius of a free commercial nation: in many respects they favour inland trade, and support universal commerce. But the method of levying these duties, the present administration of the customs, is a gross imposition, and a heavy burthen on the community.

THE duties to be paid on upwards of forty branches of old and new subsidies, would involve our merchants in an endless labyrinth, if they were not to entrust the whole management of their entries to the Custom-house clerks. The many exceptions, and exceptions from exceptions---the many regulations, and regulations of regulations, for collecting those customs, and for paying the drawbacks upon goods re-exported, make the whole business so difficult, that no merchant is master of it. A new tax is therefore levied upon British merchants at the Custom-house; which must be superadded to the value of his merchandise, and greatly enhance its price. The clerks make a separate charge for doing their duty; by which they raise large contributions; and these finally fall upon the consumers. I will not follow the cry of most writers on the subject of our taxes, by exclaiming against the number and the salaries of these clerks: but it is notorious, that many of them, who have only fifty or sixty pounds *per annum* from government, extort three or four hundred, for dispatching business, which they ought to transact, with the same diligence, correctness and expedition, without fee or reward. Upon articles of foreign importation, the

the damage is not so great; they are not always objects of universal consumption; nor is it fit they should: but all deductions from bounties and drawbacks on exportation, or re-exportation, are pernicious, in the highest degree, to the trading interest of this country.

THIS is an abuse which demands an immediate remedy.---It renders a mode of taxation, in its nature easy and equitable, rigid and partial:---for he who submits to extortion with the best grace, gets his business the first dispatched at our Custom-house.

BUT the CUSTOMS would produce an addition of 125,000*£*. annually, if proper measures were taken to suppress smuggling. The people, therefore, have a right to complain, if new taxes have been created to augment the public revenue; because proper care has not been taken to make those before subsisting, sufficiently productive.

ON this subject I am enabled to write with confidence, and a degree of certainty: for while I had the honour to serve his Majesty, it was my good fortune to be employed by the Lords of the Treasury, through the recommendation of that intelligent and active minister, the Earl of Sandwich, in secret measures for suppressing the contraband trade carried on from the coasts of Flanders to Great Britain; and so effectually to carry into execution the proposals transmitted to me from the Treasury, by that noble earl, then secretary of state, during the winter of 1764, and the spring of 1765, that the late Mr. Grenville (at that time first lord of the Treasury) expressed his particular approbation of my conduct, by letter, dated November 27, 1764; and in the month of June, 1765, transmitted me an order on the Commissioners of the Customs for a pecuniary reward, assigned me by the Board of Treasury.

IN the course of this service, I had an opportunity of forming an estimate of the annual losses sustained in the different branches of the Customs and Excise, by the illicit commerce carried on from the ports of Flushing, Ostend, Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne: by the nearest computation the nature of the proofs will admit, they amount to a sixteenth part of the net revenue now paid into the Exchequer, as the
annual

annual produce of the customs*. The means of preventing these frauds are obvious; but the misfortune is, that one minister seldom approves what another has done, especially if the predecessor has made himself unpopular: thus all Mr. Grenville's plans for the improvement of the public revenue, proved abortive; because he had been betrayed, by his enemies, into the pernicious measure of taxing the colonies; though the success of his domestic regulations of the administration of the customs, began to be sensibly felt by the fair trader, and to produce an augmentation of the public revenue, when he was unfortunately dismissed: and were the same measures now resumed, they would be attended with happier effects under the present minister, who has no formidable opposition to encounter.

To enumerate the species of frauds, to describe the methods of carrying them on, and to point out the persons who connive at, countenance, or support smuggling, would be both highly improper, and foreign to my present design. I shall, therefore, only observe, That the armed cutters employed by Mr. Grenville did considerable service, and amply indemnified the Exchequer for the expences incurred by them; but that the end I have in view, of making so large an addition to the revenue as 125,000*l.* *per annum*, will never be accomplished, unless it is made felony in the Custom-house and Excise officers to connive at smuggling, and to receive rewards for this infamous breach of trust. Raise the salaries of inferior officers, so as to enable married men to subsist their families---then make a breach of trust felony in them, as it is in the clerks of the Bank---and break all officers, civil and military, as well as all masters of packet-boats, and other vessels employed by government, detected in smuggling:---these, with two or three other expedients, (which would lose their effect if communicated to the public) carried vigorously into execution, would strike at the root of smuggling, and effectually prevent the greatest part of it, in less than six months.

* THE Customs are estimated at 2,000,000*l.*—the sum defrauded amounts to about 125,000*l.*—a sum sufficient to pay the interest of more than four millions of three *per cent.* annuities.

DUTIES on the importation and exportation of merchandise, were always chearfully submitted to in this kingdom, while they were few in number, and the method of collecting them easy and intelligent: by proper regulations their number, though not their amount, may be reduced; and this will always be an easy, equitable, permanent branch of the public revenue, constantly increasing, if it is rightly administered.

BUT there is another mode of taxation, which falls very heavy on universal consumption: I mean Excises, or inland duties on home commodities, subjected to Excise laws. This species of taxes, had only been occasionally introduced before the Revolution; and whenever it was practised, though but as a temporary aid, it failed not to excite murmurs and discontents, and sometimes violent insurrections of the people. "They are now become so general, that most of the necessities and conveniences of life are excised; and by the conversion of certain subsidies or customs into excises, the trader is put under a new set of laws, formerly unknown to our constitution, and destructive of its essence; for the powers given to the commissioners of Excise, disfranchise every Englishman, as far as he is a dealer in exciseable commodities. The great and fundamental privilege of trials by juries is preserved to the subject in all our laws respecting the customs, but it is lost in all cases relative to the excises*."

It is to be lamented, that this disagreeable expedient should have been so much approved of by government, as by several money acts, of late years, to have been made perpetual; as it is to be feared that, on a strict scrutiny, it will be found, that excises proceed on false principles.

FOR, in the first place, they are repugnant to the true revenue principle, of raising contributions, by means---the least disgustful or oppressive to the people.

SECONDLY, They throw the burthen of the public expences on manufactures and inland trade.

THIRDLY, They subject the lowest classes of the people, who, in the ancient free states, were exempted from all taxes, not only to very

* Arguments against Excises, by Caleb D'Anvers, Esq. of Gray's-Inn. London, printed by H. Haines, 1733.

heavy imposts, but to summary, arbitrary decrees, contrary to the principles of equity and humanity.

THESE are the general arguments, which I have collated from the best writers on the subject, against excises, or inland duties, on articles of home consumption, subject to Excise laws.

IN reply to which, I find great pains taken by men of the first abilities, to vindicate this mode of taxation, and to establish its superior excellence and utility, in preference to all others. Their opinions are likewise supported by the experience of many powerful modern states, whose chief revenues arise from these duties; and yet it is alledged, that the inconveniences complained of, are not felt by the subjects, in the degree suggested by their opponents.

THE examples of Holland, France, and in this kingdom, are produced as evidences of the demonstrative kind, to prove, that taxes, on consumption, are not so pernicious or burthensome as is generally imagined*. Mr. Pinto, and Sir James Steuart, are strong advocates in favour of this species of taxation; asserting, that it has the essential requisites I have pointed out, of being easy and equitable: "For," say they, "taxes on consumption are finally paid by the rich and idle; and " they are recovered by the industrious poor, in the advanced price of " their labour. The increased circulation which the money arising " from these taxes causes, when issued out again by the Treasury, in " payment of the annual interest of the national debt, augments the " demand for works of industry and ingenuity; by which means, the " inferior classes readily draw back the whole amount of the taxes " they pay on the articles they consume, including the necessaries of " life; and they thereby gain a new facultative power to pay the same " contributions in future."

* EN Hollande, le pain, qui est un objet de premiere necessité, paie un impôt qui en double presque le prix; tous les objets de consommation y sont plus chargé qu'en France, & malgré cela, la Hollande fleurit, & la machine de la finance va son train, par la magie de la circulation & du credit qui opere ces effets salutaires. L'aisance du riche fournit par la circulation, au pauvre & au mendiant de quoi payer une taxe à l'état par la consommation du comestible pour sa subsistance.—Ces taxes revient presque tous dans les mains dont ils sortent. *Traité de Circulation.*

I WISH, for the sake of my honest countrymen, the labouring poor, and actual manufacturers of every denomination, that this reasoning was as true as it is specious: but the fallacy of it is proved, by daily and fatal experience, in all parts of this opulent kingdom. It is built on false principles; for I have already shewn, in the commercial part of this work, that the price of industry has not risen, in proportion to the dearness of provisions, and other necessaries of life, occasioned by our inland taxes: neither has the rate of the market, nor the increase of demand, fixed the price of labour or workmanship, as Sir James Steuart asserts. This is the only material point, in which I have found that judicious writer mistaken; and it is to be accounted for, from his long absence, which prevented his having the opportunity of remarking a new combination of circumstances arising out of this mode of taxation, which destroys the whole force of his arguments: and, as to Mr. Pinto, his error lies, in comparing the state of inland trade, in countries whose laws, manners and commercial regulations, differ so widely, that it is impossible to establish a theory for the one, which would be equally practicable and expedient in both.

IN Holland, the master manufacturer and his workmen approach much nearer to a state of equality than in any other country. The principles of œconomy are more universal; and these uniting with rational ideas of civil liberty, put men more upon a level in this republic, than in any other part of Europe. Taxes upon consumption are paid by a people so situated, without murmuring; because every individual shares in common, and in a just proportion, the benefits of the administration of government, and is animated by the prospect of enjoying its dignities.

BUT in England, the distance between the poor industrious workman, in almost every branch of art, and his lordly master, is as great as that between an Asiatic prince, and his meanest subject: with this difference indeed---that the laws of England give him no power over the life, personal liberty, or property of his slave.

LET us reflect but a moment on the splendor and voluptuousness in which our merchants, our factors, our proprietors of capital manufactories,

factories, our wholesale, and most of our retail dealers, our polite and mechanic artists of any repute, our monopolizing farmers, &c. live at this very time; and then let us turn our thoughts to the sober, industrious, labouring poor, in the manufacturing towns at a great distance from the capital *. Here we shall find that the prices of their labour have not risen, either by the piece, or the day, or the week, in any proportion to the exorbitant advance on bread, meat, drink, cloaths and lodging. The increased demand for the consumption of our colonies, (and for other parts of the globe during the war, when we intercepted the commerce of other countries, and extended our own) may have quickened their industry, but it has not meliorated their condition; for the price of every article of subsistence has been enhanced to such a degree "as to make it difficult for any man to live without industrious and fatigable industry; and almost impossible for a man without property, to subsist a large family at all."

AN unfeeling negligence has enervated every spring of government; and one part of the people, are suffered to devour the other with impunity. In times of war---commissaries, agents and contractors, drain the Treasury of the fruits of their industry---and in times of peace, they are kept poor and needy by tyrant masters, and accursed monopolizers, of the necessaries of life---seven, or at most nine shillings *per* week, are thought sufficient to cloath the naked, and feed the hungry labourer or manufacturer, with a large indigent family; while pampered slaves in livery, and impudent waiting-maids, having no such incumbrances, are genteelly accommodated with board and lodging, and are allowed to raise their wages to extortion, at the very time, when provisions are raised on the families who maintain them.

THE fact is, that inland duties on articles of universal consumption, are not drawn back by the industry of those who pay them, in England; therefore they are oppressive---but they are more than

* WORKMEN of every species, in and near the capital, being but too justly reputed idle, profligate and debauched, these are excepted; though the method of paying them at public houses is the chief cause.

doubly

doubly charged on the public by the master manufacturers, and tradesmen of almost every class. Every new inland duty has been made a pretence for advancing the price of the commodity taxed, beyond all proportion to the duty itself; and in many articles, the quality has likewise been debased on the same fraudulent principles. Combine these two circumstances, and I am afraid, you will be at the fountain head of the immense fortunes that have been made, of late years, in some branches of our manufactures and inland trade. I need not particularize; the reflection of every sensible man will furnish him with many recent instances of the truth of these remarks.

It should, therefore, have been the business, as it was the duty, of the managers of our public revenues, when they had resolved to adopt this mode of taxation, to have guarded the public in the strongest manner, against the frauds of trade; for as the matter now stands, our great manufacturers, warehouse-men, factors and shop-keepers, have it in their power to exercise oppressions somewhat similar to those of the farmers general in France, where the government imposes a tax, and they collect double the amount from the people.

THE evil I have now stated, seems closely attached to the very nature of excises; and the remedy, I confess, appears to me so difficult, that I must beg leave to give it as my humble opinion, that it is absolutely conclusive against this mode of taxation. The remaining complaint is not so well founded; the mode of levying some of our excises is not so repugnant to our most enlarged ideas of civil liberty, as is pretended. If we are not fraudulently disposed, we have nothing to fear. Of this kind are the excises on silver plate and coaches: and as to those branches which empower the officers to visit, they chiefly respect shop-keepers whose doors are open, who, from long habit, are accustomed to these visitations, and find little or no inconvenience from them, if they have no frauds to conceal; and if any are committed, the offenders most certainly ought to be prosecuted at common law, and tried by juries. But if an annual composition was to be paid into the Excise-office, proportionate to the medium of the shop-keeper's consumption, *communibus annis*, as it is practised in other countries,

this

this great objection of visitation, so far as it respects civil liberty, would be removed; and I have no doubt, but this method would be more productive---for the expence of a multitude of officers would be saved---and it is a true principle of finances, to collect the public revenues at the least possible expence.

It would exceed the limits prescribed to this work, if I was to enlarge on this head: and it is sufficient for my purpose to have shewn that property is not followed; and a proportional contribution required on equitable principles by this mode of taxation. I shall therefore proceed to the last circumstance, on the part of government; which occasions popular discontents, and a general reluctance to pay all taxes.

It is, an improvident or dishonest application of the produce of the taxes, after they are collected.

THE complaints that have been justly made by the people on this head, for many years past, but more particularly during the last war, and at the conclusion of the peace, ought to have produced some good effect---some considerable reform in the administration of the public finances; instead of which, the same prodigality and misapplication of them was continued; but I believe the present minister has not made any striking addition to the list of pensions*. The inconsiderate, if not corrupt, dissipation of the national treasure during the last war, has been universally censured at home and abroad. Mr. Pinto, who, in every other instance, appears to be a zealous friend to the British government, ascribes the enormous increase of our national debt to this cause. "The English," says this writer, "have very little or no œconomy in their public expences in time of war; what they might have accomplished for the least, they have always performed at the greatest charges. I believe no one will deny, that

* PENSIONS are paid out of the civil-list revenue; that is to say, out of the king's personal income: but if by encreasing the number and amount of them, this income is so diminished, that the king cannot defray the expences it is charged with, he is obliged to ask for an extraordinary aid, which is granted from the public revenue; and is so far a misapplication of it, as those pensions are unworthily, or lavishly granted.

“ with a third part of their expences, they might have had the same
 “ successes: the immense and rapid fortunes made by their com-
 “ missaries, contractors and agents, in Germany, exceed all that was
 “ done formerly by the financiers in France. Waste, robbery and
 “ rapine, were, it is said, carried to the greatest excess. How,
 “ otherwise, is it possible, that the annual expences of the nation, in
 “ the last war, should have amounted to three times as much as in the
 “ war of 1744? I confess, that the enterprizes were more vigorous,
 “ and the successes more brilliant; but not in any degree portionable
 “ to the difference of expence *.”

IT is now too late to lament past dissipation; or it is to be feared, to punish past notorious offenders: but it is my duty to point out the method of proceeding in such cases, whenever any future misapplication of the public happens, if the people have the spirit, and their representatives the virtue, to call the delinquents to account: and it is no less the duty of the present, and of all future ministers, to restore the strictest frugality and œconomy in the administration of the treasury department, as the most essential means of continuing public credit on a sure foundation, and of fixing a permanent value on the funds.

“ PETITIONS are to be carried up to parliament by public bodies,
 “ such as corporations, complaining of known profusion and suspected
 “ fraud in the administration of the revenues, and requesting that the
 “ House of Commons would proceed to the usual methods of taking,
 “ examining and stating the public accounts of the nation.” An act for this purpose, was passed in the first year of the reign of queen Ann, when the want of care and fidelity in the management of the public money was charged home on the Earl of Halifax, Auditor of the Exchequer; the Earl of Ranelagh, Paymaster of the Army; and Jacob Vanderesche, Esq. Paymaster of the Dutch Forces: the two last, being members of the House of Commons, were disgracefully expelled, and

* LES fortunes immenses & rapides que leurs entrepreneurs ont faites en Allemagne, passent tout ce que les financiers faisoient autrefois en France. Les gaspillages, les brigandages et les rapins ont été, à ce qu'on prétend, portés au comble.

Traité de la Circulation, p. 126.

prosecuted for the sums due to the Treasury; but Lord Halifax was screened by the House of Lords. In the tenth year of the same reign, Robert Walpole, Esq. was committed to the Tower, and expelled the House of Commons, for receiving 1000*l.* on account of contracts for forage of the troops in Scotland, when he was Secretary at War. Adam Cardonell, Esq. secretary to the Duke of Marlborough, underwent the same punishment, for taking an annual gratuity of five hundred gold ducats, from the contractors of bread and bread-waggons, for the service of the army in the Low Countries.

IN the twelfth year of the same reign, William Churchill, Esq. a commissioner for sick and wounded seamen, was convicted, by the House of Commons, of having reserved to himself half the profits to arise on some of the contracts made by that board; and Thomas, Earl of Wharton, of having received 1000*l.* to procure a place for a gentleman: each of which practices were, by a resolution of the House, declared to be an high breach of trust, a scandalous corruption, and highly detrimental to the public. But as the crimes had been committed before the general act of indemnity passed in 1708, the House could proceed no further.

AFTER this, we hear no more of any acts of parliament for taking, stating and examining the public accounts of the kingdom; nor of any reports of committees exposing defaulters to the public odium and contempt of the nation. The salutary measure of enquiring into the application of the public money was laid aside; a total good understanding and harmony having subsisted, during the succeeding reigns, between the managers of the Treasury, and those who at sundry times were suspected of having embezzled, or lavished very considerable sums, to serve the corrupt purposes of influencing elections, and the conduct of members in the House. In the present reign, complaints of this nature have been both loud and frequent; and to the honour of the late Mr. Grenville, be it remembered, that he actually began a strict scrutiny into the validity of the demands, made by our cormorant commissaries, contractors and agents, whose accounts he curtailed, and thereby saved the nation some millions: his intention of reforming

other abuses in the treasury department, particularly his enforcing the laws of trade against smugglers, contributed nearly as much as the fatal stamp-act to raise a general outcry against his administration, and to facilitate his dismissal.

THE city of London has since made an unsuccessful attempt to obtain a satisfactory account of an immense sum, alledged to have remained unaccounted for to the public, by Lord Holland; but on what foundation we cannot pretend to say, because the question has never come to a fair decision. But the use I intend to make of these examples, taken from the History of England, since the Revolution, is, to shew that the secret murmurs and open complaints of the people will never cease, nor will they ever pay their taxes chearfully, without fraud, till committees of the House of Commons are appointed to examine the public accounts every two or three years in times of peace, and annually during a war---that misapplications of the produce of their industry, may be reported---and the criminals, who live luxuriously on their contributions, be brought to justice.

IT is now time to observe, that if at any period the people are satisfied, that all the money levied on the community at large, is faithfully and frugally applied solely to public services, and that the taxes are both easy and equitable, it must be want of reflection, if they do not pay them with a good grace; and scandalous dishonesty, if they discover an evil disposition to defraud the public revenues, by smuggling: for they should remember, that all the subjects are bound in one common bond to support the civil government under the protection of which they enjoy inestimable rights and privileges; and that it is the indispensable duty of every individual to contribute, in a due proportion, to the national expences: for, as an elegant Italian author observes, "Every individual, in paying taxes, deposits a part of his property in the public treasury, in order to preserve the remainder, and to enjoy it securely *."

* IL tributo adunque si è una portione delle proprietà, che ciascuno depone nell' erario pubblico, affine dè conservare con sicurezza la proprietà che gli rimane. *Meditazioni sulla Economia Politica*, NAPOLI, 1771.

MUCH has been written on the signal advantages of abolishing all taxes; and the nations where the least imposts are levied, pass, with speculative patriots, for the happiest: but these visionary sentiments experience has refuted; and it has been proved, by the example of several modern commercial states, that moderate taxes, judiciously laid, and the produce faithfully applied, promote circulation, encourage industry, and better the condition of the lower classes of the people. Since, therefore, our national expences will not admit of even a reduction of our taxes, without losing sight of the more beneficial plan of preventing new imposts in future times of war, let us direct all our attention to the following objects.---

A GENERAL reform in the mode of levying some of our taxes, to render them more easy and equitable.

THE substitution of some new taxes, which I am to recommend, in the room of those that are the most oppressive and burthensome to the industrious poor.

AN inviolable application of the produce of the sinking fund, during the peace, to the sole purpose of raising a fund for the payment of the interest of future loans, without imposing future taxes.

THE first tax I have to propose is, on menial servants of both sexes, both natives and aliens.---I leave the ratio in this, and all other cases, to the discretion of the managers of our revenue affairs; and shall only refer them, and the public, to Mr. Pinto's proposal on the same subject, published since I delivered mine in my lectures *.---If this tax,

* IL y a un impôt plus juste qu'aucun autre, dont l'Angleterre pourroit faire usage, & qui seroit d'une grande utilité pour le royaume. C'est une taxe sur chaque domestique à l'instar de la Hollande. Le luxe excessif qui multiplie le nombre des domestiques oisifs, fainéans & inutiles, est préjudiciable à tout le corps de l'état. C'est une armée insolente, qui fait continuellement la guerre à la vertu & aux mœurs; les domestiques sont les instrumens & les fauteurs du vice, du libertinage & de la débauche; c'est un tas d'inutiles enlevés à la culture des terres, aux manufactures, à la marine, & au militaire. Or donc ceux qui par faste, ostentation & vanité, veulent nourrir & habiller ces déserteurs de l'ordre, doivent dédommager l'état de cette perte par un espece d'équivalent. Je voudrois donc que ceux qui n'auroient que deux ou trois domestiques, ce qui est honnête & nécessaire, ne payassent que dix schellings par tête; mais ceux qui en auroient quatre, payeroient une livre sterling par tête; ceux qui en auroient cinq, deux livres sterling par tête; ceux qui

and some of those subjoined, are not quite so productive as a sanguine minister might expect, let it be remembered, that they will act at least as sumptuary laws, at a time when luxury is carried to an excess that renders it baneful to commerce; and in a country where the latitude of civil liberty prevents sumptuary laws, because they are restraints on the subjects.

THIS tax alone might send back 20,000 idle hands, the pageants of pride, and votaries of gluttony, to arts, manufactures and trade, in the country, from the metropolis alone.

THE ingenious Dr. Price informs us, that of every 1000 inhabitants who die in London, 250 are settlers, who come to it after eighteen or twenty years of age: and from my own enquiries, I am certain, the remote counties of England and Scotland have poured in such swarms of their natives to this metropolis, that both masters and servants in every art, trade and profession, are chiefly aliens; and in the city they are made denizens by purchase---a shameful corruption in the corporation, which government should eradicate!

A TAX on all provincial emigrants, on the weekly importation of raw Scotch lads, and all other foreign settlers in London, would be equitable with respect to the natives of the capital; it would be proportional to the benefits derived from carrying on business as masters, or receiving wages as clerks, &c. in this great market, in preference to their residing in the respective places of their nativity; and it might be political, by preventing those continual emigrations, which depopulate the country.

FOR the same reasons, a tax should be laid on horses, or on all machines, stages and post-chaifes, (not kept by the post-masters) which facilitate the transport of people to the capital.

en auroient six, trois livres sterling; & ainsi de suite, doubler toujours la taxe sur chaque individu qui excède le nombre donné. Il résulteroit de grands avantages de la création de cette taxe. Les grands, les gens très riches augmenteroient considérablement le revenu du fisc, qui recevrait des sommes immenses des mains de Plutus, de l'orgueil, & de la vanité. C'est puiser dans la véritable source des impôts; les ordres subalternes feroient des réflexions, reviendroient de la folie de multiplier des ennemis domestiques, & rendroient à l'état un grand nombre de sujets, que la nécessité emploieroit plus utilement, soit dans l'agriculture, soit dans l'industrie. Cet impôt devroit aussi être consacré inviolablement au *sinking fund*.

A TAX on celibacy has been frequently recommended; both Mr. Pinto and Dr. Price enforce it: and indeed, such a tax would be peculiarly equitable and expedient in this country, in which all the hardships, through principles of false policy, fall on married people. The batchelor, in his lodgings, pays neither national nor parochial taxes; the little he contributes to the state, by the articles of consumption he purchases, is hardly worth mentioning: neither are his pleasures taxed; and the difference between such a situation, and that of a married man, is so striking, that matrimony is more and more avoided---the consequence is depopulation*. Yet taxation ought to follow unencumbered property, and to augment its demands on luxury. This leads me to another hint.

WHY should personal stock in trade be taxed in the present defective, partial, inadequate mode, annexed to the land-tax; and stock, or property in household furniture, amounting to thousands, remain exempt? Here a resolute, able minister, has a fine field for improving the revenue, and acquiring popularity.

LET a pound rate be laid on all household furniture exceeding fifty pounds value, on the oath of the possessor---by this tax alone, more than sufficient might be raised to extinguish one of those now subsisting on the necessaries of life---either that on soap, candles, leather, or salt. Like the coach-tax, it would chiefly affect the rich; and it would likewise check the extreme progress of luxury.

A TAX on collateral successions, to personal estates, not subject to the land-tax, is recommended by Mr. Pinto, as it subsists in Holland. These successions being very often as unexpected as great prizes in a lottery, it should seem, that the state might avail itself of so fair an opportunity to demand the contribution of a part for the preservation of the whole, at the instant when the balance of wealth is turning in:

* THIS is a fatal competition, by which a door is opened to great distress.—Either the unmarried gain what the married should, and become extravagant; or the married gain no more than the unmarried can do, and having many mouths to feed, with only two hands to supply the necessaries, become miserable.

Sir James Stuart's Political Oeconomy, vol. ii. p. 505.

favour.

favour of the contributor. But this is an uncertain resource, which we ought not to attempt, unless it be to enable us to exonerate the people of an oppressive tax.

I MUST here repeat, a maxim of the first importance.---It should be the chief object of the managers of the public revenues in this kingdom, to keep up the price of the funds at market, and to hinder all unnatural fluctuations in them, so that they may circulate freely, as near the par of the money advanced to government by the original subscribers (the *douceurs* excepted) as possible.

WE have seen, that the arts of stock-jobbing frustrate this laudable plan: I shall therefore throw out an improvable hint---for counterbalancing the tricks of the alley; and I hope it may be considered as a proper succedaneous expedient, if, as it is generally believed, we cannot absolutely undermine JONATHAN'S, without running the risk of blowing up PUBLIC CREDIT.

LET an act of parliament be made to legalize all time-bargains; and to make the debts arising from differences on these transactions valid, so that they may be recoverable at common law.

THEN, as a variety of frauds have happened from the irregular manner of keeping the accounts of such contracts, in the brokers pitiful memorandum books; let it be enacted, that all persons, whether brokers or otherwise, entering into contracts for buying or selling any share in the funds for any future time, exceeding the next transfer day of such funds, after the date of their contract, shall be obliged to deliver to each other reciprocally a specification, under their hands, of the said contract, on a stamped paper, under a penalty, &c.---The price of the duplicate stamp should be proportioned to the sum contracted for---suppose an eighth *per cent*, the same as brokerage---but this, as I said before, I leave to the discretion of my superiors.

AWARE of the outcry that will be raised against me, it remains only, that I offer to the candid and disinterested part of mankind a short vindication of my scheme.

IT will nearly, if not entirely, annihilate the most pernicious class of jobbers---those who go into the alley without any capital, and against whom

whom the monied jobbers play at double hazard. The dread of imprisonment for insolvency on a large difference, will deter them at least from deep ventures, and diminish the fabrication of false news to serve sinister designs.

No restraint will be laid on the circulation of the funds, by those who really have property vested in them; an exemption for holidays, and the shutting of the books being allowed, in the clause relative to the next transfer day.---And, as to our friends on the other side the water, since it is acknowledged by MR. PINTO, that they make large profits (more than common interest) by their time-bargains in our funds; why should not they pay---pardon the familiar phrase---for seats at the gaming-table? Can any reason be assigned why policies of insurance should be subject to a stamp duty; and the speculative, fictitious dealings in the government funds, remain free? The former are legal, commercial transactions; the latter, detrimental superstructures, upon foundations belonging to our neighbours. Besides, the public at large contribute, by the taxes, to the expences of the management of the funds at the Bank, &c.---an annual heavy charge! ---On what pretence then shall those who are not the creditors of the public, derive a singular advantage from the national aids, without contributing to them?---And surely to game on the basis of other men's property, and thereby to affect the value of it, is, indeed, a very singular, a very strange advantage!

SUCH a tax, should it be established, I am fully convinced will prevent all artificial fluctuations in the funds in times of peace:--it will limit them in times of war---it will be easy, equitable, and productive.

BUT to this, and all other hints for meliorating the public revenue, the dread of innovation will probably be a temporary, if not a total barrier; unless the minister presiding at the Treasury possesses the same fortitude and abilities as SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, who boldly stemmed the torrent of popular abuse, and ventured to alienate the sinking fund, a few years after its establishment; at a time too, when the whole kingdom was delirious with the ideas of its inestimable benefits.---I have shewn him the road to laudable fame, and general esteem;

esteem; it is in his option to pursue the journey, or to decline it: of one thing, I am certain---that he, who first relieves the lower classes of the people, by improving the public revenues, so as, by substitution of others, to take off the burthensome taxes on the necessaries of life, may, with such salutary alterations, safely continue the amount of the present taxes (which at any rate he cannot lessen) for fifty years to come; may provide a fund, which will empower him to declare, that no additional income by taxation will hereafter be required, even in times of war; and will then be justly deemed the sincerest, the greatest patriot of the age.

THE task I had assigned myself is now completed; and I hope the end I chiefly had in view, by the publication of the three treatises in one compact volume, will be fully answered. It is my ambition to place my name in the records of posterity, as the author of a valuable supplement to the education of British youth, after they quit the public seminaries, where classical learning is their chief object.

THE award of my judicious countrymen will determine my claim to that honour; and either encourage me to future services of the same kind, or put an eternal arrest on my pen.



F I N I S.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Author of this Work resides at a small distance from London, and receives into his house to the number of Ten Young Gentlemen of Fortune, about the Age of Fourteen, to instruct them in Elocution, and the other branches of learning, mentioned in the note to page 216.

His terms are One Hundred Guineas per annum for each Pupil. Letters left for him at the Publisher's, or at the Bar of the London Coffee-house, Ludgate-street, will be immediately forwarded to him, and duly answered.

A THE Author of this Work writes in a familiar style from London, and
wishes that his book to the number of the Third Edition of Fortunes
about the Age of Fortunes, to which there is a Preface and the other
branches of Fortunes, mentioned in the note in page 216.
His name and One Hundred Guinea per annum for each Part.
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any other.

